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LECTURES

ON

THE APOCALYPSE.

BY

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“Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.”—*Ps.* 87 : 3.

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P R E F A C E .

THE author of the following Lectures lays no claim to originality in the views which they express. He has read several learned works on the Apocalypse, and has not hesitated to adopt their sentiments and language, without formal notice, whenever they have approved themselves to his judgment. Especially is he indebted to the very able exposition of Mr. David N. Lord, whose interpretation he has generally adopted throughout the following pages. Indeed, he advises those who have the means to purchase and the leisure to read that work, not to examine this at all, but to proceed at once with the more original and extended investigation. It is apparent, then, that his design is to present to the general reader, in a cheap and condensed form, the substance of what is contained in treatises less accessible to him. The spirit of the age calls for cheap literature. A book that sells at seventy-five cents, is bought and

read by ten times more persons than an octavo of superior merit, which costs two dollars. With him it is a very small thing who shall gain the reputation of authorship, provided the Word of God be explained, and His truth be widely diffused. If these ends be attained by the following pages, the whole purpose of their publication will have been accomplished.

INTRODUCTION.

THE distinguishing characteristic of the Apocalypse is, that it foreshadows what it reveals, not by words, like ordinary prophecies, but by representative agents and phenomena exhibited to the senses of the Apostle. These representatives are called symbols. The first thing to be studied, then, in order to a correct understanding of this book, is *the law of symbolic representation*. We cannot suppose that the Spirit of God employs, in an arbitrary and irregular manner, either words or things to reveal truth to man. There must be some fixed and uniform principle of interpretation, which should guide the student in all his inquiries. What, then, is this principle, as applied to the explanation of symbols? We answer, *analogy*. And what is analogy? It is not a direct resemblance between the representation and that which it is used to represent—but it is a *resemblance of their relations* to other things. Thus, a seed is not like an egg in shape or substance, but it is analogous to it, because it bears a relation to the producing plant, or to the future germ, similar to the relation which the egg sustains to the parent bird, or to the future nestling. *Analogy, then, is the resemblance of relations*. This principle, we conceive, lies at the foundation of all correct exposition of the Apocalypse. When-

ever any object in nature, animate or inanimate, or any fictitious creature, is employed to symbolize any thing future, it bears an analogy to that which is symbolized. This principle is susceptible of many modifications. I will mention a few.

1. The symbol is usually selected from species or orders different from those to which the thing symbolized belongs. Thus, a ferocious wild beast denotes a dynasty of slaughtering kings—to whom it sustains an analogy—and not some other wild beast, to which it might have only a direct resemblance. A sea represents a vast multitude of persons united under one government, while fountains and streams flowing into that sea, symbolize tributary communities.

2. When the object to be described has nothing to correspond with it, either in the ideal or actual world, it is always introduced in its own name and character. Thus the Martyr-Souls, the Deity, the Incarnate Word, and Satan, are mentioned in their appropriate persons. Where no befitting symbol can be found, none is used, but descriptions are given to indicate the nature of the beings mentioned. The agencies exerted by those beings, as seen in vision, and the uses ascribed to their several insignia, are, however, to be considered symbolical.

3. When intelligent and living creatures are employed as symbols, they represent intelligent agents—never the mere qualities of such agents. In like manner, causes represent causes, effects denote effects, and actions correspond with actions. The several elements of the symbol thus stand for the corresponding parts of that which is symbolized.

4. The names of the symbols are their literal and proper names, not metaphorical titles and descriptions. This is man-

ifest from the circumstance that the acts and qualities ascribed to them are suited to their nature—a circumstance that never characterizes the metaphor.

5. In some instances, agents that represent men denote, not individuals, but an order and succession of agents, acting in the same relations and exerting a similar agency. The offices they sustain, and the agencies and periods specified of them, justify this construction.

Our limits will not allow a more minute statement of the various modifications to which the great principle of analogy is subject; but these are regarded as the most important. See D. N. Lord's Theol. and Lit. Journal, Vol. I., No. 2, 1848.

What, now, is the proof of the correctness of this principle? We answer, *the interpretations of the symbols given by the Son of God and the attending angels*. "The seven stars are the angels—messengers—of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." Rev. 1: 20. As the star gives light, so it is a suitable representative of a gospel teacher; and as the lamp-stand holds up the light, so it symbolizes a church, who sustains the teacher. In like manner, the "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, are the seven Spirits of God," (chap. 4: 5,) because the office of the lamp, like that of the Spirit, is to illumine. The seven heads of the wild beast are explained to be seven kings, and the ten horns to be ten kings. Chap. 17: 10–12. In vs. 15, the waters are explained to be peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues; and in vs. 18, the woman is said to be the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. In the prophecies of Daniel we learn that the four great beasts which the prophet saw were four

kings or dynasties which should arise out of the earth—7: 17. In the next vision the ram with two horns seen by the prophet is explained to be the kings of Media and Persia, and the rough goat to be the king of Grecia—8: 21, 22. Other examples might be adduced of the same kind. In all these cases the symbols selected bear a striking analogy to the objects for which they stand. Our inference, therefore, is, that the symbols of the Bible which *are left without interpretation, must be expounded according to the same general law*. If this conclusion be pronounced illogical, we ask the objector, with all sincerity and humility, to show us a better way. Until that request be granted, we shall hold to the principle of analogy, as the only safe guide to the exposition of this most remarkable book.

LECTURE FIRST.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTERS I.; II., III.

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. I John, who also-am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being

turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and *his* hairs *were* white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.—
Rev. i: 1-20.

Vs. 1. The book takes its title from the first word in this verse. It is sometimes called the Apocalypse, a word of Greek origin, but of the same import with *revelation*. All scripture is a “revelation” of the divine will, but this is peculiarly so, because it discloses things future, and of rare importance. The title of the prophecy was obviously prefixed after the visions were written, while the visions themselves were written successively, as they were beheld. It is necessary to distinguish between the knowledge of Christ as a divine person, and that which he possesses as the Prophet of his church. In the one sense he knows all things—in the other, he receives his messages from his Father, and delivers them to his people. In this latter sense he knew not the day of the

downfall of Jerusalem—it was no part of the revelation that God gave him to make known to man. Hence the first verse says *God gave this revelation* to Jesus Christ, and he by his angel signified it to John.

The writer now introduces himself (vs. 2) as a witness of the word of God—i. e., what he was about to communicate was not of his own invention, but was from heaven;—it was the testimony of Jesus—the things of which John was an eyewitness. (3.) To induce us to give attention to these things he now pronounces a blessing on all who “read, hear and keep” the words of this prophecy. Such a benediction is pronounced in respect to no other portion of scripture. Surely we should be anxious to *understand* what it is a blessing to read, hear and keep, and we should be cautious how we discourage attempts to explain this prophecy. Here, too, is another motive. The time of the fulfilment of most of these predictions is at hand. And if this was true nearly eighteen hundred years ago, at present many of them have been accomplished, and the residue are hastening to their consummation. “The time is at hand” signifies, not that the events were soon to reach their accomplishment, but only that the series would speedily commence. That representation accords with usage. We speak of successions of events—however interminable—as being nigh, when their beginning is at hand.

Vs. 4-6. Ancient letters always commence with the name of the writer and the names of the persons addressed. Having labored among the seven churches of Asia Minor, he addresses himself to them in the three first chapters. May favor and peace be unto you from the Father, Spirit and Son. The phrase, "which is, and which was, and which is to come," alluding to the Father, implies his eternity, and is singularly appropriate as an introduction to a prophecy concerning the mutability of creatures. The phrase "seven spirits" alludes to the abundant gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, denominated seven because symbolized by seven lamps. See chap. 4 : 5. As the number seven is the symbol of perfection, and as there were seven churches, so the phrase "seven spirits" describes the rich and copious influences of the Holy Spirit. To the blessing of the Father and Spirit he adds that of Jesus Christ as a "faithful witness" to the truth of this prophecy—as the first who had risen from the dead, and as the possessor of authority over all earthly rulers. How consoling to the persecuted saints! He cannot leave the name of Jesus without a sweet doxology. "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

He directs his suffering people to his second coming for their consolation. (7.) The Jews that

pierced him, and the idolatrous Gentiles, shall see him and bewail, while his redeemed shall respond *amen* to the tidings of his advent, and to the judgments of his throne. (Vs. 8.) This language must refer to Christ as speaking of himself. Alpha is the first letter, and Omega the last of the Greek alphabet, and the phrase is explained in the following words. The eternity and omnipotence of Jesus afford comfort to his afflicted churches, and terror to his enemies! The asseveration Yea, amen, (vs. 7,) and the proclamation of his attributes, (vs. 8,) denote the certainty of his coming, and that it is to carry to all his creatures a resistless proof that he is the Self-existent—the Eternal—the Almighty. (Vs. 9–20.) Banished to the Isle of Patmos by Domitian for preaching the gospel, A. D. 95, the spirit of prophecy came upon John on the Lord's day, the first day of the week; that is, he was thrown into the state of prophetic ecstasy, in which visions were beheld and revelations received—and he heard the sound of a trumpet behind him, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."—vs. 11. Being turned, he perceived that the voice proceeded from the Son of Man, in the midst of seven golden candlesticks, and having

in his hand seven stars. There was a golden candlestick in the temple, which had seven branches. Here, there were seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are explained, vs. 20, as teachers who spread the light of God's word through the circles around them—the seven candlesticks, as churches supporting such teachers in the stations in which they fill their office. So glorious a vision overpowered the beholder, and he who familiarly leaned on Christ's bosom at supper now fell as dead at his feet. He is roused up and hears these consoling words: "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." All the other apostles had fallen—he was left alone, and was now banished. Death and hell threatened to devour him, but Jesus says, I have the keys of hell and of death.

The design of this vision was to apprise the prophet from whom the commands and messages about to be uttered proceeded, and to raise him to becoming thoughts of him and his government. How well this august spectacle was suited to produce this result, must be apparent to every mind. He is commanded to write the things *seen*, the things that *then existed*, and the things that were *future*. These are the three divisions of the book, embracing a general view of the gospel dispensation, from the ascension of Christ to the end of the world.

Before proceeding to the seven churches, it should be observed—

1. That the descriptions of them refer to the state in which they then were, and are designed to furnish encouragements, warnings and reproofs to all future churches in similar circumstances.

2. These epistles are addressed to the pastors of the churches in their official character. They are called angels, i. e., messengers, in these several addresses, because they were probably sent by the churches to visit the apostle during his exile, to express to him their affection, and to receive from him encouragement and counsel in their difficulties.

3. In every address Christ assumes a distinct *character*, selected from some one part of the description given of him in the preceding vision—a character probably suited to the condition of the church addressed.

4. Every address begins with a *commendation*, provided there be any thing to commend. If we wish to reclaim our brethren who have fallen into sin, we must appreciate what is good in them and commend it, before we reprove their faults. Paul introduces his censure of the Corinthians for desecrating the Lord's supper, by saying, "Now, I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered them unto you."

5. Most of these churches deserved rebuke for some portion of their conduct or faith. If the

earliest and purest churches seemed thus to Him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, how would those of the present day appear? But the same eyes are upon *us*!

6. Every address closes with a *promise* to him that overcometh, and an *exhortation* to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. Does not that Spirit still address *us*?

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.—*Rev. ii : 1-7.*

Ephesus was the metropolis of Proconsular Asia. The gospel was planted here by Paul. When he took leave of them at Miletus, they were in a good state, but he forewarned them of trials. The character in which Christ addresses them is that of one holding the seven stars in his right hand, and walking amid the seven golden candlesticks—i. e., defending, sustaining, inspecting his people by his presence and grace. Their state was still highly commended. They worked—even labored for

Christ ; and when persecuted were patient—maintained a sound discipline against evil men and false teachers, and endured these labors and trials with becoming fortitude. Yet Christ had somewhat against them. They had left their first love. Here we see that God looketh at the heart. Though we may not fall into open apostacy, yet a declension in our affections is criminal. To feel less interest in Christ, his cause, his people, his ordinances, is to reproach Him. It is to say, We have not found *that* in his religion which we expected to find. Of this sin the Ephesians were exhorted to repent, and disobedience was threatened with their extinction as a church. A declension in love is followed by degeneracy in good works, to which they are urged to return. He again commends them for hating the doctrine of the Nicolaitans—a people who practiced a community of wives, and lived in open excesses. The address closes by promising the victor the fruit of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. No flaming sword, no cherubim should prevent access to this tree.

And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write ; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive ; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, but thou art rich ; and *I know* the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer : behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days : be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches ; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.—ii : 8-11.

The character under which Christ speaks to the church in Smyrna is as "the first and last," who was "dead and is alive." The former is expressive of his Godhead, the latter gives an example of persecution and of deliverance from it. He commends their works and poverty for conscience sake, while they were rich in spiritual graces. We hear much of respectable congregations, but the Saviour esteems those most worthy, who, though poor in this world's goods, are rich in divine influences. These brethren had to contend with the unbelieving Jews, who, by denying and blaspheming their Lord, now merited the appellation of the synagogue of Satan. They were taught to expect more trials from the agents of the devil, and exhorted to courage and fidelity, by the promise of a crown of life and exemption from the second death.

And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, *even* where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas *was* my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.—ii : 12-17.

The character now assumed is that of one who has a sharp sword, with two edges, and wears a terrible aspect against a corrupt party of the church in Pergamos. The great body of the church, however, is commended for their steadfastness amid prevailing vices and persecutions. One of their number had even been slain for his attachment to the gospel. Still, there was a shade in the picture. Some of the members tampered with idolatry, and its ordinary attendant, fornication, and the rest connived at it. This is called the "doctrine of Balaam," because in this manner that wicked prophet drew Israel into sin. Numbers, 31 : 16, 25 : 1. They also had among them adherents to the doctrines of the Nicolaitans, who, perhaps, sanctioned idolatry. They are exhorted to repent, on pain of Christ's displeasure, who threatens to execute against them the judgments of his word. To those who vanquish these spiritual foes he promises "hidden manna," i. e., secret spiritual blessings—a white stone, i. e., acquittal from all their sins, (the Romans put a black stone into the urn for condemnation, and a white one for justification,) and a new name, i. e., exalted honor, which only he could appreciate who should enjoy it. The Greeks gave white stones to the conquerors in the Olympic games, with their names upon them.

And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and ser-

vice, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works. But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have *already*, hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.—ii : 18-29.

The glorified Saviour here possesses eyes like a flame of fire, indicating the power to search the heart, and feet of fine brass, denoting the stability and glory of his proceedings. He highly commends their works, and charity, and service, and patience, and *works*. Nor is this last word repeated without cause. It implies their persevering, and even abounding, in good works. "The last were more than the first." Of some churches and some Christians it may be said, Christ may know their *works* and their *works*, i. e., their first and their last works, but the *first* are more than the *last*. Of this church, the last were more than the first. Nevertheless, he had a few things against *them*, even. Ahab, the king of Israel, married

Jezebel, the daughter of the king of the Zidonians. By her influence he and his people served Baal, and were drawn into idolatry and fornication. 1st Kings, 16 : 31. In allusion to this fact, the corrupt part of the church, given to idolatry, and inducing others to commit the same sin, is here called Jezebel. As that woman made pretensions to divine authority, and drew the servants of God into literal and spiritual fornication, so these had a kind of religion that would comport with eating and drinking at idolatrous temples, and thus of being guilty of spiritual adultery. These corrupt members he threatens most awfully with death, "and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." To kill with death is to destroy by a natural disease, in contradistinction from violence, as by a sword. He now commends those who hold not that doctrine, and who had not experienced the depths of Satan's guile, promises to the faithful the honor of judging the ungodly, and ultimately triumphing over them, and that he would give them the morning star. To have power over the nations, and to rule them with an iron sceptre, is to be made king over them, and to reign with Christ after the first resurrection. As the morning star is one of the names assumed by himself, it may denote that he himself will be their eternal portion; or, as Christ is the morning star which is to rise on the New Jerusalem, and to su-

persede the need of the sun or moon, to have that star is to belong to the New Jerusalem at its descent from heaven. Let us hear what the Spirit says unto the churches. In the address to this church we are taught by the Spirit that we may be members of a true church, and yet not be true members of the church.

And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.—*Rev. iii : 1-6.*

The character in which Christ addresses the Sardian church, is that of one who hath the seven spirits of God, and who holds the seven stars. This may be designed to direct them and their pastor where to look for reviving grace. Such grace they greatly needed, as they had “a name to live, while they were dead.” Individuals among them are commended, but the great mass of the members were deplorably wrong. He exhorts them to watchfulness—to a resurrection of their languishing graces. It is bad for the world to be dead, but for a church to be so is worse.

This is for the *salt of the earth* to lose its savor—for the *light of the world* to become *darkness*! If any of us are like these brethren, let us heed the warning. And the best way to do it is that each one should *begin with himself and end with another*. The means of recovering from such a state are, “remembering how we received and heard” the gospel at the first. Call to mind the former days, not to get comfort under our declension, but to recover those sweet emotions which we had at the beginning of our Christian course. This church is threatened with the visitation of sudden judgments, unless they should repent. The few names in Sardis that had not defiled their garments are highly approved. To walk with God at any time is acceptable to him, but to do this while others around us are corrupt, is more so. *This is being faithful among the faithless*. They shall walk with Christ in white, i. e., in purity and honor. This promise of being clad in white raiment is again repeated to those who shall overcome. To be clothed in a white robe is to be adorned as a bride, when prepared by a resurrection for a descent as the New Jerusalem. They should not have their names blotted out of the book of life, but should be confessed before his Father and the holy angels. God is here represented as keeping a register of his professed followers, and if any turn back their names are erased. In other places, those not found in that book are spoken of as forbidden to

enter the New Jerusalem, but as being cast into the lake of fire. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which is* new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.—iii: 7-13.

There is a great difference between the church at Sardis and that at Philadelphia. In that there was nothing to commend; in this nothing is censured. The character under which they are addressed accords with the address itself. He that is "holy and true" approved them—he that hath the key of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, had set before them an open door which no man can shut. Not distinguished by opulence or worldly influence, they had made a good use of their "little strength"—had held fast to the truth under persecution. Christ therefore promises that

the hostile Jews residing in the city should be finally reconciled. The ninth verse may either signify that these Jews shall be won over by their example, and shall sincerely worship God among them, or that the Christians should so increase in number, that the Jews in their wars with the Romans would feel the need of their friendship, and should come to them with cringing submission, and own that God sustained their cause. He proceeds: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience," i. e., hast been patient according to my word under past trials, I also will keep thee in that fearful season of persecution that shall originate either from the heathen or from corrupt Christians. As the Lord punishes sin by giving men up to it, so he rewards righteousness by preserving them in its paths. He announces to them his speedy advent either by their individual death, or by his coming to the earth in the way of judgments. And though he had confidence in them, yet he admonishes them to hold fast to their integrity that no man take their crown. We may counsel those in whom we see all things right at present, and none are more willing to receive counsel than those who need it least. He strengthens this admonition by a promise. They that overcome these approaching difficulties shall be made pillars in the temple of my God—denoting stability and support in his kingdom. This may refer either to their useful and influential lives in the church militant, or more

probably to their high station in the millennial kingdom. Unlike the pillars of the Jewish temple, which were removed by the Chaldeans and Romans, they shall go no more out, but shall remain as permanent supports to the cause of salvation. They shall stand as pillars of beauty and strength in the heavenly temple. He proceeds: I will write upon him the name of my God and of New Jerusalem, and my own new name. These terms imply the honor that awaits them. God shall recognize them as his in the last day by the impress of his own name on their souls, and he shall admit them to exalted honors in his eternal kingdom.

And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.—iii: 14-22.

This church was in the worst state of any of the seven. Even Sardis had a few good names, but Laodicea is censured without distinction. The

merciful Saviour, however, does not give them up, but rebukes them in love. The character under which he addresses them is that of the "Amen, the faithful and true witness," which implies that unpleasant as was his complaint against them, it was true. Christ is here called the beginning of the creation of God. It is true that as to his human nature, he was created, but the text cannot allude to this, because as to his body, it was not the first that God created. It therefore means that he is the *first cause*, the *origin* of creation. (ἡ ἀρχή) A message from such a being deserved their serious consideration. He knew their works, but did not approve them. They were "neither cold nor hot." To be cold is to have no religion and pretend to none—to be hot is to be zealously occupied in Christ's work. But these people were neither this nor that—they were not decidedly religious, nor would they let religion alone. This state of mind is peculiarly offensive to Christ. To halt between truth and error, God and the world, is worse, in many respects, than to be openly irreligious. Corrupt christianity is more offensive to God, and more hurtful to society, than open infidelity. No man thinks the worse of the gospel for what he sees in the openly profane, but it is otherwise in regard to professors of religion. If he that nameth the name of Christ depart not from iniquity, reproach must fall on the honor of Christ. Hence he says, "*I would thou wert cold or hot*"—be

fervent, honest, thorough going Christians, or make no pretensions at all to religion. The cause of their deadness is next assigned—they were rich, and increased with goods and had need of nothing. Worldly prosperity is often a great hindrance to vital piety. If God send us opulence, we should pray mightily for humility and benevolence. The two states of worldly and spiritual success may both be united in one man. But it is often not the case. While the Laodiceans were in temporal things so well circumstanced, in religion they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked! What a dreadful contrast! He counsels them as sinners in common, who knew not the Saviour. Such were many of them, and if any had known him, yet being in a backslidden state, their only remedy was to come as sinners immediately to the Saviour. They were directed to seek the true riches, (tried gold,) the true righteousness, (white raiment,) and the true wisdom, (“anoint thine eyes.”) They could not give any valuable consideration for such blessings, being already spiritually bankrupt; but still it is called *buying*, because they were in a certain sense to part with all for them. This is what the prophet means when he says, buy wine and milk without money and without price. The only way for sinners and backsliders to find mercy, is to give up all and come to God through Jesus Christ. He next assures them that love was his motive for rebuking them. How often does

hatred among men lead to reproof! Not so with Jesus. He has the greatest cause to hate us, and yet his love is the greatest! He manifests a singular perseverance in trying to win them back to his friendship. "Behold I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." I am seeking entrance into your hearts, that our fellowship may be sweet and mutual. He promises to those individuals among them who should hear his call, open their heart, and endure to the end, a participation in his own glory, even as he shared, after his conquest, in his Father's glory.

LECTURE SECOND.

REVELATIONS IV., V., VI. : 1-4.

After this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven : and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me ; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit : and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and *one* sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone : and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne *were* four and twenty seats : and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment ; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices : and *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal : and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast *was* like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast *was* like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him* ; and *they were* full of eyes within : and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.—*Rev. iv. : 1-11.*

The Apostle having, in the three first chapters, informed us of the things that he had seen, and

things that then existed, now proceeds to describe those which in his day were future. *The whole of the fourth chapter, however, is introductory to what follows. This vision was designed to show that the revelations about to be made were from the Deity. It was also designed to raise the prophet to a becoming sense of the infinite majesty of the divine character, and of the exalted rectitude of his government. The scene of the vision is, therefore, the heavenly world. No where else could it have been with equal propriety. Where but at the throne of Intelligence could a creature learn the secrets of futurity? Where better than in his immediate presence could the mind of man form suitable conceptions of God? A door being opened in heaven, the Apostle was invited to enter in. Having entered, he immediately finds himself under prophetic inspiration. He was not removed from the earth as to his body; but, as Ezekiel was carried by the Spirit to Jerusalem, and saw what was transacted there, while his body was still in Chaldaea, so John was still in Patmos, while wrapt by divine inspiration and introduced into the invisible world. He beheld a throne set in heaven, and one sitting on it, who was the Supreme Ruler. His countenance was like a jasper and a sardine stone, and a rainbow arched over the throne, in appearance like an emerald. As the bow in the cloud was a sign of peace and good will to men, it may here denote that the glory of God will be displayed

towards his church in the way of covenant mercy. He next describes the retinue of this august Being. There were twenty-four subordinate thrones encircling Him, on which sat twenty-four elders, clothed in white, and wearing crowns of gold. The number is probably taken from the twenty-four orders of priests ; and the elders may, therefore, be the representatives of those of all nations who are redeemed by the blood of Christ. The lightnings, and thunders, and voices proceeding out of the throne, possibly indicate that from Him who sat on it should come all the terrible judgments that would afflict the earth. The seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, explained to be the seven spirits of God, denote the abundant influence of the Spirit as the source of all divine knowledge. As a lamp gives light to the body, so the Holy Spirit illumines the mind. Before the throne was a sea of glass, like unto crystal. This crystal sea, as it was in appearance, but which was so solid that the harpers are afterwards described (15 : 2) as standing upon it, stretching out in vast extent before the throne, may imply the grandeur and stability of the divine government, as opposed to the turbulence and uncertainty of human thrones. The four living creatures—unfortunately rendered *beasts* in our version—are stationed nearer to the throne than the elders—are superior to them in rank, and precede them in acts of worship. They probably represent those who conduct the worship

of God in the church. That they are the same as the cherubim, is apparent from the strong resemblance of these to those seen by Ezekiel, and called by him cherubim; and from the fact that in the tabernacle and temple, that were made after the pattern of heavenly things, there were four cherubs in the holy of holies—i. e., two on each side of the mercy seat. They are spoken of as distinct from angels, and as belonging to the human race, because redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. If they do symbolize the leaders of divine worship, their different faces may describe the qualifications of the ministers of Christ, as varying with the necessities of successive ages. The face of the lion imports courage—of the calf or ox, patience of toil—that of a man, intelligence—and that of the eagle, enterprise. Each of them had six wings—to denote their zeal and swiftness to obey God—while their vast knowledge of the ways of the Almighty, both past and future, is shown by their being full of eyes before and behind. That these living creatures are superior to the elders in office, is evident from the statement that it is in concurrence with them that the elders fall down and worship. “And when those living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O

Lord, to receive glory and honor and power : for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.' ' The worship of these beings bespeaks a lofty perfection of knowledge, and a singular beauty of rectitude. Their sensibility to the glory of God's moral perfections, is raised to a refinement and strength equal to the perfection of their intelligence. They see an infinite beauty in his spotless righteousness, his unchangeable truth, his boundless benignity, his majestic condescension, and in the vast, the all-perfect and the innumerable forms in which these qualities are displayed towards his creatures, and they are borne by an irresistible impulse of delight to their perpetual celebration.

And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not : behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings

and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.* And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, *Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* And the four beasts said, *Amen.* And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.—*Rev. v : 1-14.*

John saw on the right hand of Him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the outside, and sealed with seven seals. We must not suppose that what is here called a book resembled the form of our books. Imagine seven pieces of parchment, written on both sides, and rolled round a stick as we roll up a map. Each of these parchments had a seal at the end on the outside, so that until the seal was broken the contents were invisible. This book was the symbol of the purposes of God. The writing on both sides indicates the many things to be revealed; while its being in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne, and being sealed, denote that his designs in regard to the administration of the church and world were hidden from creatures. The proclamation by a strong angel—"Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose its seals?" shows that no created being was able, unassisted, to discern it, or was of a dignity equal to the office of revealing it to the hosts of heaven, or to the church on earth. The beloved John wept much because no one was

found. He cherished a fervid interest in the divine purposes, and expected that great and wonderful events were approaching. He had been invited up to heaven to learn things that were yet to interest the church—here was a roll that contained them, but no one could break its seals ! He wept much ! One of the elders, observing his distress, said, “ Weep not : behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” This language unquestionably designates the Lord Jesus Christ. The object of this great scene was to show that He is exalted to the throne, and exercises the government of the universe—that he attained that exaltation by his work as Redeemer—that thence the right belongs to Him alone to reveal to creatures his designs, and that he is to conduct his administration in the redemption of his people according to the eternal purposes of God. John, therefore, beheld the risen and glorified Saviour, designated a lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns—the symbols of all-perfect dominion and power—and seven eyes—the symbols of all-perfect knowledge, or of the every-where present and potent influence of the Holy Spirit under his direction. This wonderful personage, uniting the majesty of the lion with the gentleness of the lamb, takes the book out of the hand of him that sat on the throne, and prepares to open the seals. And now the whole church of God, by their repre-

sentatives, are described as falling down before the Lamb, and joining in a sublime chorus of praise. As the priests offered incense under the law, so the living creatures and elders, having harps, and sustaining to the whole church the relation of priests, present to the Lamb, in prostrate homage, the golden phials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints. How pleasing the intimation thus given that the supplications of believers are heard and laid up in heaven. They also sing a new song, as suited to a new manifestation of mercy—saying, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” Nor could the primeval angels, though not redeemed by his blood, be silent on such an occasion. How vast a multitude was there to give dignity to the scene! “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” All these countless and glorious beings render their united, joyful and splendid adorations to the Lamb. They exclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” Observe that they ascribe to him those

very qualities of which he divested himself on earth. Thou art worthy to receive *power*, though once in the form of an infant and servant, and *riches*, though on earth thou wast poor, and *wisdom*, though of no reputation in the world, and *strength*, though formerly subject to infirmities and death, and *honor*, though despised by men as a Gallilean, and *glory*, though by sinners spit upon and crowned with thorns, and *blessing*, though once loaded with curses as a glutton, a drunkard, and blasphemer ! Nor is the song confined to angels. The whole creation acquiesce in the praise of God and the Lamb. “ And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” At every pause in this grand symphony, the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures add their loud amen, worshipping him that liveth for ever and ever.

The presence of angels and of the redeemed on the occasion of opening the volume, shows that the revelation was made to them as well as to men. In view of these anthems sung by angels and the redeemed on high to Christ, who will say that he is possessed only of human or only of angelic endowments ? And who will insist that the volume which the Lamb unsealed is yet closed and unin-

telligible? And who will charge with presumption, and vain curiosity, an attempt to understand events, the disclosure of which thrilled the celestial hosts with rapture?

And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see: and I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.—*Rev. vi: 1, 2.*

We must not suppose that there was on the scroll a mere picture of a warrior on horseback. The white horse and his rider were presented to the view of the prophet as real agents—performing real acts—and both the agent and his acts were significant. The opening of the seal only denoted that it was by the agency of the Redeemer that the purposes of God about to be unfolded were revealed. It was, therefore, the mere signal for the manifestation to the prophet of the symbolic spectacle by which it was followed. The seal was first broken—one of the living creatures exclaimed to the horseman, “*come,*” with a tone so loud that all the angelic armies might hear, and immediately the warrior horseman came forth. The expression, “*come and see,*” has usually been understood as addressed to the Apostle; but the best copies read simply “*come,*” and if it be the correct version, the summons was addressed to the horseman. The personage on the horse is a warrior, manifestly, from his being armed with a bow—an instrument

used at that period in the East by cavalry in attacks at a distance. The crown was given to him, after his appearance, for the conquests he had already gained. It denoted that he had gained them in behalf of the power from which he derived his authority, and that he had conducted his warfare conformably to the end and laws of his office. The horse was merely subsidiary to his exerting a representative agency ; and his color was white, because in triumphal processions generals rode on white horses, in token of victory. This symbol is the representative, not of one individual, but of the pure teachers of Christianity at large, who went forth from the period of the visions, and fulfilled their office conformably to the Word of God, assailing with the arrows of truth the hostile armies of idolatry, and subjecting them to the sceptre of Christ. A warrior who conquered provinces transferred the allegiance of the vanquished from their old to their new rulers. He placed them under new laws. He impressed a new character on all their civil and military relations. So the ministers of Christ, who, by proclaiming the gospel, became the instruments of converting men to faith in Him, transferred their supreme love from self, and their religious homage from idols, to the true God. They introduced them into a new community—subjected them to new laws—and worked a radical change in their moral relations. In accordance with this view, writers tell us that there was a

rapid spread of the gospel from the close of the first to the middle of the third century. In the celebrated letter of Pliny to Trajan, he informs the emperor that an amazing number of persons had avowed themselves Christians. "Informations are pouring in against multitudes, of every age, of all orders and of both sexes. And more will be impeached. For the contagion of this superstition hath spread, not only through cities, but villages, and hath even reached to farm houses. The temples of the gods were almost deserted, the solemnities of idol worship were intermitted, and sacrificial victims found but few purchasers." And the intelligence was true, not only of Asia Minor and Syria, but of various other countries. Rome, the mistress of nations, was becoming obedient to the faith, and the diadem of the Cæsars was soon laid at the foot of the Cross.

And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.—vi: 3, 4.

The summons by the living creature was probably addressed in this instance, as before, to the symbolic agent, not to the prophet. He exclaimed "*come*," and there went forth another—a red horse. This horseman is a warrior also. The sword, like the bow, is an instrument of contest and dominion, but more destructive. Used only

in close combat, it is employed with greater passion, and is the implement alike of defence, of ambition, and of revenge. This warrior takes peace from the earth. He is aggressive, therefore, as well as the former, but unlike him, he interrupts the security and peace which he is bound to promote, and grasps at an authority and dominion that do not belong to him. He uses his sword, therefore, for personal and sinister objects, and against the ends for which it is designed. He is accordingly not crowned, but only obtains a greater sword, by which his power to destroy is increased. The agents whom this symbol denotes are also teachers of the church. To slay one another with the sword is to destroy each other's spiritual life by violence. This was done by a sentence of exclusion from salvation by an authoritative decree. It was done in a still higher sense by compelling one another through the power of their office to embrace an apostate religion, by which they necessarily perished. What class of teachers, then, is there in the church in whose agency these peculiarities meet—a usurpation of powers which Christ has not authorized—a destruction thereby of religious peace from the earth, and finally a compulsion of men to apostacy in order to confirm and perpetuate that usurpation? All these are conspicuous characteristics of diocesan bishops, especially of the Asiatic, African, Greek and Roman churches. When the gospel was first propa-

gated, each church had its presiding officer. He was called pastor, bishop; elder, overseer, presbyter or teacher, according to the different lights in which his office was viewed. Between all the churches, and all their bishops, there was perfect equality. No one had any official precedence of the others. All the communicants of a city were considered as one church, and all the elders as belonging to that church; but as no spacious edifices for worship were then erected, and as persecution forbade their assembling in large bodies, they met in small companies at private houses, each with a pastor to conduct their devotions. The churches of the several cities were in like manner equal in right and authority, and wholly independent of each other. In process of time, however, strifes for distinction and power arose among the presbyters of the cities. Each one claimed a peculiar right to his own congregation, and endeavored to retain his control to the exclusion of the other presbyters. To prevent the jealousies and animosities thence arising, the councils, which then began to be held, decreed that one chosen by the presbyters of their own number should be placed over the others and denominated their bishop. The new office, however, instead of a check to ambition, tended rather to increase their competition for honor, wealth and influence. It gave rise to intrigues, rivalries and contests that destroyed the peace of the church and of the empire, and has

continued to generate them through every subsequent age. The bishops, thus created, soon began to assume the power to legislate over the church and thence over the rights and will of God. They decided what was orthodox—claimed the privilege of conferring or withholding ordination, and by the injunction of celibacy, by the imposition of cruel penances, by compelling a participation in rites felt to be idolatrous, they destroyed the peace of millions. Then followed in quick succession the decrees of councils enjoining the invocation of saints, the homage of relics, and the worship of images. These were enforced by the most solemn anathemas that carried terror wherever they were published. The excommunicated were not only forbidden to enter religious assemblies, but were debarred from society, deprived of civil rights, divested of their property, and rendered infamous. They thus filled up the prophetic symbol of John—peace was taken from the earth—they killed one another with spiritual death—they brandished the great sword that was hurtful to the souls of men.

LECTURE THIRD.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER VI: 5-17.

And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.—vi: 5, 6.

This symbol is taken from political life, and is a ruler who reduces his subjects to want and misery by taxation. This is denoted first by the balance, the symbol of a civil magistrate—next by the wheat, the barley, the oil and the wine—articles over which he exercises authority; thirdly, by the price, which implies that he determines the rates at which they are to be valued; fourthly, by the command to injure not the oil and the wine, which denotes that the taxes are so oppressive that the husbandman prunes the olive and the vine to prevent their bearing and to exempt them from assessment, and finally by the color of the horse, which indicates affliction.

The voice from the living creatures describes the agency the horseman is to exert, but is not pro-

phetic of restraints to which he is himself to be subjected. The price of a day's labor in that age was a penny, the choenix of wheat was the usual allowance for a day's sustenance, so that it took the entire proceeds of a man's labor to support himself, to say nothing of his family. The scarcity and the high price of provision caused greater exactness to be used in weight and measure. This symbol is drawn from the Roman Emperors, who taxed their subjects until famine desolated the whole empire. But it is designed to foretell the famine of spiritual food which was brought on the church by its professed teachers. They withheld from the people the supports of spiritual life—that knowledge of God, of their own condemnation, and of the way of life through the Saviour, to which they were entitled, and which was requisite to a vigorous piety. And this perversion of their office distinguished the ministers of the church during the whole of the third and a quarter of the fourth century.

Let us specify—

1. They failed to hold up the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, the sanctity of God's claims, the alienation and guilt of man, the full atonement made by the death of Christ—justification by faith in his blood, and the nature and necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. In their controversies with idolaters they relied on the doctrines of a vain philosophy, instead of those from the

Bible, which are mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.

2. When the Bible was appealed to, its great truths were obscured by the mystic and allegorical methods of interpretation which were then introduced. Men were taught to disregard its natural and obvious meaning and search for that which was distant, fanciful, and often absurd. History was converted into fable and parable, laws, doctrines and promises into types, and the whole volume of revelation was thus made a chaos of shadows.

3. The scriptures were further set aside by the fabrication of apocryphal gospels, marked by extreme meanness of conception, abounding in gross errors, and adapted to lead to low and false apprehensions of the government of God and of the work of redemption.

4. Not only the doctrines of theology, but the ordinances of Christ were now perverted. Justin Martyr held that remission of sins was conferred in baptism on those who were already regenerated. Clemens, Alexandrinus, Tertullian and Origen held that the influences of the Spirit, as well as the remission of sins, were bestowed in baptism. By a large part of the bishops it was soon believed that the ordinance was a spiritually regenerating rite, and its mere reception was thence made an absolute ground of reliance for salvation. The transition was quite easy and natural to the belief

and practice of infant baptism. If baptism be the medium of forgiveness and salvation, then the unbaptized are lost. The fears and affections of tender parents could not long fail to find a soothing remedy for such an alternative. And the weakness and delicacy of the subjects surely required the least painful and unpleasant mode of applying the baptismal water. Hence in after time originated the change of the action of baptism from a burial to the use of a few drops! Thus a mere sacramental religion was substituted in the place of repentance, faith, adoration and obedience. The church was taught to look to the minister instead of the Spirit of God for renovation. And as he alone claimed the right of administering the ordinances, a foundation was laid for the towering structure of priestly authority and power.

5. In like manner the eucharist began at this period to be regarded as fraught with a saving virtue, its reception deemed an ample preparation for death, and a presumptuous trust reposed in it that led to a neglect of personal holiness. Men would live the most wicked lives, in the belief that the bath of regeneration and the consecrated bread and wine, received at the eleventh hour, would entitle them to heaven. This misconception was carried so far that at last the communion was given to infants—was administered in all cases at the approach of death to those under penance, though

they became delirious, and was sometimes even placed in the lips of the dead !

6. In this age also flourished those false ideas of sin and holiness which led to excessive fasting, to celibacy and to asceticism. Instead of being taught to restrain their appetites within the limits prescribed by the law of God, the people were made to believe that every impulse of hunger, thirst or desire, however irresistible, was degrading and sinful, and was to be suppressed by a stern and merciless violence. Marriage, the first social institution of the Almighty, and the most propitious to all the forms of virtue towards men and piety to God, was denounced as merely sensual and sinful. Men withdrew from the spheres of usefulness to which Providence had assigned them, disowned all the social and domestic virtues, retired into solitudes, and struggled by starvation, self-torture and watchfulness, to annihilate their passions and to render themselves incorporeal beings. Paul of Thebais, (A. D. 260,) lived sixty years in a solitary cave. Anthony, of Lower Egypt, continued nearly seventy years in the most perfect seclusion. These examples became infectious. Then started up monasteries and nunneries, with their long and gloomy train of crime and superstition. And all this was dignified with the name of religion.

By these methods the professed teachers of the church verified the prophecy and occasioned a destitution of the means of spiritual life similar

to the dearth of bread produced by oppressive taxation.

And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.—vi: 7, 8.

The agencies of the preceding horsemen were employed chiefly in varying the conditions of life. The office of this is to kill, and his name is for that reason Death. This character is indicated also by the "pale horse," and by his attendant the grave, which *ἀδης*—here translated *hell*—undoubtedly denotes. His instruments of destruction are also mentioned. He kills with the "*sword*," i. e., by violence; and with "*famine*," that is, by oppressive taxation, producing poverty; and with "*death*," i. e., by tainting the air with pestilence resulting in death; and by "*wild beasts*," i. e., the ferocious agents that he employs to execute his will. This symbol again describes a series of agents in the religious world. As death kills the body, so an apostate religion murders the soul. And the teachers of that religion accomplish this object by breathing from their lips the pestilence of false doctrine, by causing a famine of the bread of life, by wielding the sword of ecclesiastical authority, and by an alliance with civil rulers, whose tyrannical power likened them to the wild beasts of the earth. All these peculiarities meet in the

archbishops and other superior prelates of the fourth and following ages, and especially in the patriarchs of the Greek and the popes of the Roman church.

1. They breathed a pestilence of false doctrine, which infected the whole body of the church and carried spiritual death to thousands. Some of these false doctrines were such as the following:—That the relics of the apostles, prophets and martyrs possessed miraculous virtues—that churches erected over their graves and dedicated to their memory, rendered worshippers peculiarly acceptable to God—that the spirits of the holy dead could intercede in our behalf on high, and were, therefore, the appropriate objects of our prayers—that the bread and wine used in the eucharist were transformed into the real body and blood of Christ—that there was a real sacrifice for sin repeated at every communion—that the officiating minister, therefore, became a priest, and that the elements were fit to receive adoration—that the images of the saints might be safely and profitably worshipped—that prayers were needful for the dead, so that they might escape purgatorial fire and be admitted at once into paradise—that the creature could not only work out a righteousness adequate to the demands of the law, but doing more than was required, could transfer a portion of his merit to the benefit of his fellow creatures—that the priests could absolve the penitent confessor from the guilt

and the punishment of sin, and to finish the climax of absurdity and blasphemy, that they could even grant indulgence to commit future sins without liability to punishment! Millions of money have been paid by deluded souls for the privilege of sinning with impunity! And catalogues of crimes were even published, with the price of indulgence for each crime annexed, to prevent exorbitant charges!

2. As death by the sword in distinction from famine and disease, is a death by violence, so a resembling spiritual death must be by an analogous violence, in distinction from a deprivation of knowledge symbolized by famine, or an infusion of false doctrine denoted by pestilence. As when a fatal wound is inflicted by the sword, the body by its own constitution works an immediate death by the expulsion of the blood, so the wound that produces spiritual death must be such that the subject of it works his destruction by rejecting the means of life—not by being deprived of spiritual sustenance on the one hand and inhaling a pest on the other. And such is a compulsory apostacy, or abjuration of essential truth at the dictation of authority. Its effect on the soul is like that of a deadly wound on the body. Every act under it is a rejection of God and his salvation, and precipitates the soul into a more inevitable and speedy death. And the great chiefs of the hierarchies have inflicted death in this manner on a large scale. The persuasion that

bishops have legislative authority over the faith and worship of the church, and that the pope is the vicar of Christ and of absolute power to determine doctrines and rites, placed the Greek and Roman communions at the will of the great prelates of those churches. Authority has been the great sword by which they have, at every period, struck down the objections of reason, awed conscience into silence, and pierced the captive and helpless soul with a deadly wound.

3. Their agency is also symbolized by famine, because like the third horseman they continued to withhold the great doctrines of the gospel—the aliment of the soul—from the people. I will only add to what was said when expounding the third seal—that this famine was kept up by denying the Scriptures to the people. For long ages the Bible was not allowed to be translated into the dialects spoken by the various nations who embraced christianity. Public worship was conducted and instruction given in Latin, which soon became unknown not only to the people at large, but also to many of the clergy, and the great essentials of christianity were as completely swept from the knowledge of the multitude as if they had never been revealed.

4. They employed, in this work of destruction, the civil rulers of the ancient and modern empire, symbolized by the wild beasts of the earth. Since the days of Constantine, the church has been, in

all Catholic countries, leagued with the State, and has used the civil authorities to inflict its cruel anathemas. As we shall dwell on this in future, we will not now enlarge.

Power was given to this destroyer over a fourth part of the earth, by which is meant the Roman Empire. This is called the fourth part, because in Daniel the civil history of the world is spoken of under four grand divisions—Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman—the last being here particularly alluded to.

And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.—vi : 9-11.

During the preceding ages God had always preserved a pure church and a chosen people on earth. Many of them had laid down their lives in testimony to the truth. It was very apparent that agencies were still operating that would result in the martyrdom of many more then living, and of many yet to live on earth. This vision seems to be designed to encourage those against whom the heathen or papal fury should still be directed. John saw under the altar the disembodied souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus. Unlike the agents de-

noted by the symbols of the foregoing seals, these martyr-souls are exhibited in their own persons, and obviously because no other beings could serve as their symbol. No creature on earth could present to them any analogy on which their symbolization could be founded. They are stationed under the altar, or at its foot, as a symbol of the cross, the instrument on which the expiation had been made which was the ground of their trust. As the fire burned on the altar, so the fire of God's justice had burned on the cross. There his rights had been vindicated—his truth and rectitude maintained. The design of the altar, then, was to exhibit them as believers in Christ, having relied on his sacrifice for justification, and now appealing through it to his faithfulness for a redress of their wrongs. Their cry implies an expectation, founded on a promise, that he would interpose and destroy those who were slaughtering his people, that a long period had intervened since the utterance of that promise, and that his truth and righteousness were concerned in its fulfilment. They were not, therefore, impatient under sufferings, or resentful against their persecutors, but cherished a regard for the word and glory of the Redeemer, whose victory cannot be completed till his promises be fulfilled. The period of uttering the cry was that between their death and their public acceptance, in token of which white robes were given to them. Their wonder at the delay of the promise

was excited by the vision of the incarnate Deity, by their loftier sense, thus acquired, of the sanctity of his rights—of his power to accomplish his purposes—of his forbearance towards his foes—of the greatness of his love to his people, and of the glory of the salvation to which he exalts them. They also felt a pity and love for those whom they had left exposed to the sufferings of persecution, and a desire that their sufferings should terminate. The form in which they uttered their surprise at his delay, is eminently beautiful, becoming beings for the first time approaching his visible presence, meeting his smile, beholding his dazzling majesty, and realizing the splendors of the existence to which he raises his redeemed. It exhibits them as entering his presence with a profound interest in his glory, a fervent desire to understand his ways, confidence in his rectitude, and a sense that the new and immortal career on which they had entered is to owe its beauty and blessedness to the accomplishment of his purposes. The gift of a white robe to each of them, denotes that they were formally accepted, and adjudged to the inheritance of life—a white robe being the symbol of justification. The response to their appeal, that they should rest yet for a short time till their brethren, who were to be killed also, were completed, indicates a great and blissful change in Christ's administration over the world, when he should descend to vindicate their blood—that that change

was to take place as soon as the number of martyrs was completed, and that the period to intervene was but short, in comparison with the length of the persecutions that were past. The vision contains no statement as to the period to which it belongs. It was probably towards the close of the Reformation, in the sixteenth century.

And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sack-cloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind; and the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?—vi: 12-17.

The symbols of this seal represent a succession of violent and disastrous changes in the political world, ending at length in the dissolution of all forms of civil government. The earthquake denotes a violent commotion in the subjects of government, by which they are thrown out of their former position, into new relations—the high brought low—the obscure raised to stations of influence, and confusion and violence spread through every scene. The conversion of the sun into the color of sack-cloth, and of the moon into blood, represents a change in the civil rulers, (thus sud-

denly raised to power,) from the beneficent influence which they should exert, to oppression—to a lawless violation of the rights, devastation of the property, and destruction of the happiness of their subjects. Then follows the precipitation of these oppressors from their stations to a level with the multitude, symbolized by the fall of stars to the earth, like the dejection of unripe figs from a tree shaken by the wind. Next, a total dissolution of government and obliteration of all political distinctions, indicated by the passing away of the heavens, and the removal of the mountains and islands out of their places ; and lastly, the consummation of the catastrophe by the visible advent of the Redeemer to judge his enemies, to accept his people, to take possession of the earth, and to commence his millennial reign. This is shown by the terror of the kings and their subjects, their retreat from the splendors of his presence to dens and caves, and their cry to the rocks and mountains to hide them from his wrath. This is in accordance with the symbol of the seventh trumpet, and with the Saviour's prediction, (Mat. 24 : 29,) that his coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, is to follow a darkening of the sun and moon and a fall of the stars.

We must not suppose, however, that all these events will take place together, or within a brief period. They must naturally occupy a long series of years. Political convulsions, and the change of

rulers from justice to oppression, indicated by the earthquake and the color of the sun and moon, require a long period. It is subsequently that the fall of the stars takes place, by which the dejection of rulers symbolized. The final disappearance of the heavens, the removal of mountains and islands, and the promiscuous flight of rulers and subjects from the presence of the Lamb, are to follow at a still later period.

The first three of these great events have probably already taken place. If so, the first, the earthquake, symbolized the revolution in France, extending from the beginning of that political agitation to the fall of the ancient government. The second (the sun being darkened and moon becoming as blood) represented the change of the new government into a despotism, and its exercise, through a series of years, of a violent tyranny. The third, (the fall of the stars,) the overthrow of that oppressive dynasty, at the fall of Bonaparte in 1815, and of Louis Philippe in 1848. Between that fall and the final subversion of the governments of the earth, denoted by the passing away of the heavens, the sealing of the servants of God, symbolized in the next vision, is to take place. Then will follow the annihilation of civil governments—the visible advent of the Son of God—the resurrection of the holy dead—the confinement of Satan in the abyss, and the reign of the risen saints on earth with Christ during the period designated by the thousand years. See 1st Thes. 4 : 16, 17.

LECTURE FOURTH.

REVELATIONS CHAPTERS VII., VIII.: 1-11.

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasseh were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zebulun were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.—*Rev. 7: 1-8.

The four winds denote all the winds, and the four angels, all the powers that excite and direct their violence. They are obviously tempestuous winds, which, when roused, are to sweep land and sea, and spread them with desolation. The peculiar office of the angels is, not to restrain them,

but to excite and* direct their violence—not to make them salutary, but the instruments of universal devastation. The restraint from injuring with them till the servants of God can be sealed, is a restraint, accordingly, from entering on their official work till that sealing can be accomplished. What, then, are these symbolic winds? What is there that sweeps over the great surface of the social and political world with a power analogous to wasting whirlwinds? The answer is, combinations and masses of men, under the influence of new and exciting opinions—multitudes roused to passion, uniting to destroy social and political institutions, and to overwhelm those that obstruct their designs. And who are the angels that arouse those tempestuous blasts? The authors and propagators of those opinions—the fomenters and directors of the violence to which they excite men. That they are not to enter on their work till the angel from the sun-rising can seal the servants of God, implies that though the elements of destruction are already in existence, yet their being blown into a whirlwind, is to be a consequence, in some manner, of that sealing. It is by that process that the religious and political atmosphere is to be brought into the requisite state for the generation of the desolating tempest. No description is given of the figure of the four angels, on account of the extreme distance of their station.

To seal the servants of God, is not to constitute

them such, but to fix a mark on their brows by which they are conspicuously shown to be his. It is as his servants, not as his enemies, that they are sealed, and the change wrought by their sealing is not in their character, but in their aspect. The symbol denotes, therefore, that the servants of God, ere the whirlwind of ruin begins, are to be led to assume a new attitude towards the apostate church and the usurping civil rulers, by which, and in a manner never before seen, they are to be shown to be indubitably his true people. What that relation is to be, is revealed in a subsequent vision, in which their characters are described as opposite to those of the apostate church. They are virgins, i. e., not seduced by the great harlot of Babylon to worship the beast or its image, as do apostates. They are followers of the Lamb, wherever he may go—not of the wild beast or false prophet. They are without guile, and without spot, not like those whose religion adds to their guilt. The sealing, therefore, is to be a public and formal dissent from the legalized hierarchies of the earth—a renunciation of the dominion over the people of God which they have assumed—a testimony against it as an arrogation of authority over the laws of God. The angel who bears the seal represents those who excite and conduct this separation and testimony; and their agency, we shall see, is to precede the slaughter of the witnesses and the fall of great Babylon. The tribes

denote the denominations of the church. As the twelve tribes were all the divisions of the ancient church, they represent all the branches of the Christian profession that contain the true servants of God. This movement, therefore, is not to be confined to one denomination, but is to be extended to all that contain true worshippers. The precision of the number indicates a limitation, perhaps, rather than a universality of the sealing—that a part, only—not that all the servants of God are to share in this movement. This is shown, also, by the summons of his people to come out of Babylon after the slaughter and resurrection of the witnesses, and after her fall. The sealed and the witnesses are undoubtedly the same.

No body of believers has ever yet assumed an attitude towards God and the nationalized church which is represented by this sealing. This prophecy is, therefore, yet to be fulfilled. The great and palpable fact, that to establish a church by law, and to dictate its faith and worship, is not only to usurp the prerogatives of God, but to assert a dominion over his rights and laws, has never been fully discussed and proclaimed. The ground on which religious toleration has been urged has ever been, that compulsion is a violation of the rights of conscience, not that it is an arrogation of dominion over the prerogatives and laws of the Almighty. But such it really is. When civil rulers nationalize a church, they assume the right

of determining what the faith and homage of their subjects shall be. They appoint a creed—they enjoin a worship—they prohibit all others. They offer their *will* as a reason why that creed should be held and that worship offered, and they treat dissent as a violation of their rights, and punish it as a crime. They thence clearly assume that the laws which God imposes on their subjects are under their dominion. They arrogate a jurisdiction over the duties which their subjects owe to Him, and thence over his right to their obedience and homage. They thus enjoin and compel a homage to themselves that is due only to Him. This is the relation, accordingly, in which their usurpation is exhibited in this prophecy. Those who approve and support their legislation over the doctrines of the gospel, are called the worshippers of the wild beast, and they who assent to a similar usurpation by papal ecclesiastics, are said to worship the image of the wild beast. Civil rulers enjoin either a right or a wrong worship. If they enjoin a wrong worship, i. e., a different religion from that which God has instituted, they clearly assume the power of rescinding his laws and substituting their own. If they enjoin a right worship, i. e., the same that God appoints, they thrust themselves between God and his creatures, and affect to make his laws binding because they enjoin them. Whether, therefore, the state-church hold false doctrine or true, it is an impious assumption of the divine throne for any

civil authority to establish religion by law. But this principle has never been prominently asserted by any community, as it will be by the sealed. The advocates of toleration have all taken lower ground. One says, no doctrine or worship should be imposed but such as God has enjoined—as if *his* injunction were not sufficient: another, that such imposition is a violation of the rights of the citizen—not that it is an arrogation of divine rights. And even the English Dissenters have not opposed the *principle* of an establishment, so much as the rites and ceremonies which the legislature have imposed.

The sealing of the servants of God, then, is not a symbol of their conversion or of their preservation from the blast of the tempest, but of their more public testimony to the great truth that *Christ is the only King and Lawgiver of the church*, and that all *national churches are blasphemous assumptions of his throne*.

After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, [and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have

washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.—vii: 9-17.

The scene of this vision is the divine presence. The countless multitude stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and are the redeemed raised from the dead, publicly accepted and exalted to the station of heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ in his kingdom. They are clothed in white robes, implying their justification. They have palm branches in their hands—the emblems of joy on account of victory. They ascribe their salvation to God and to the Lamb, which shows that it is accomplished. They are come out of great tribulation, which implies that their trials and their sufferings have reached their close. Their sanctification is also completed. They have washed their robes and cleansed them in the blood of the Lamb. They are, therefore, exalted to stations in the presence of God and to the honors and joys of an eternal service in his kingdom. He that sits on the throne is to dwell in a tent among them. They are never more to feel sorrow or suffering, but the Lamb is to guide them as a shepherd, and to lead them to the fountains of the waters of life. That these beings had been raised from the dead is evident from the fact that their salvation was com-

plete—a statement that could not be made if their bodies remained unransomed from the curse of sin. How interesting, then, was that multitude! What an elevation of nature, what a grandeur of intelligence, what a beauty of affection do they exhibit! How vast a change from the sins, the conflicts, the miseries of their previous life—from the agonies of death and the darkness and ruin of the grave to which they had been doomed! How grand, too, is the homage of the angelic hosts! They behold and justify the acceptance of the redeemed, and while they perceive the beauty and greatness of their salvation, they ascribe it all to the might, and wisdom, and love of the Redeemer. Their homage implies that the redemption of the innumerable throng is finished—that they understand the arrangements by which it has been effected, and that its infinite glories will excite the wonder, admiration and joy of eternal ages.

And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.—viii: 1-5.

Having finished one series of prophecies that extended down to the era of the resurrection of the

holy dead and their final acceptance, the Apostle now begins a new series, without, however, a formal announcement. This series goes back and foreshadows events from the early period of the Christian era to its termination. The silence in the heaven of the divine presence was doubtless symbolic, as well as the agents and acts that followed. It was a period of thoughtfulness, of awe, and of expectancy—denoting that ere the great judgments about to be symbolized were to be inflicted, the worshippers in heaven were to be called by contemplation, submission and faith, to a preparation for the displays of justice which they were to witness. It implies also that during a short period no new agents were to go forth to work important changes in the world, and that there should be a brief space of tranquility compared with that which had preceded and was to follow—a space marked in a preëminent degree by fervent supplications of the church for deliverance from the power of a persecuting government. The period on earth corresponding with that silence was probably that of repose between the close of the persecution by Diocletian and Galerius in 311, and the commencement, near the close of that year, of the civil wars by which Constantine the Great was raised to the imperial throne. That period was marked by impassioned desires and hopes of the church for the elevation to power of a Christian prince who should free it from persecution.

The seven angels, though they appear immediately after the silence and receive their trumpets, do not enter on their office until the prayers of the saints have been offered and answered by a tempest and an earthquake in the empire. This denotes that the events symbolized by their agency could not take place until those supplications had received an answer. You will understand the action of the angel with the golden censer by bearing in mind that in the Jewish temple there were two altars. The one called the altar of sacrifice, that stood immediately before the vestibule of the temple, on which the fire burned continually. The other was called the golden altar, situated within the sanctuary, on which incense was offered. (Levit. xvi: 12, 13.) And another angel came and stood at the altar of sacrifice with a golden censer. While in that station, an attendant gave to him much incense to offer with the prayers of all saints on the golden altar. Receiving the incense and filling the censer with coals, he proceeded into the sanctuary and fired the incense on the golden altar, while the smoke ascended before the holy of holies in which was the throne of the Almighty. Then returning to the altar of sacrifice in the court, he again filled the censer with coals, and cast them to the earth, and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake. All this was symbolic of an agency, not on earth, but in heaven. It denoted that there was to be a visible recognition

in the Redeemer's presence of the supplications of the church on earth. The angel, in offering the incense, personated the order of beings that fulfilled that office. As the fire of the altar is the symbol of the instruments of divine justice, the angel's filling his censer with coals from the altar after his return from the sanctuary and casting them to the earth, denoted that the prayers of the church were to be answered by avenging justice. And the voices, lightnings, thunders and earthquake denote that that justice was to be inflicted in a succession of violent commotions in the empire, in which the visible church was to have an immediate interest. In fact, these voices, &c., were symbols of the contests and revolutions which attended the downfall of paganism and the elevation of Constantine to imperial power.

And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.—viii: 6, 7.

The angels' preparation of themselves that they might sound, was probably a removal from before the throne to a station over that part of the earth which was to be the scene of their respective symbols. They are not here to be regarded as symbols, but their office is simply to aid in conducting the revelation—in distinguishing the periods of the several events and in exhibiting them in their

relation to God. The proper symbol in this vision was a violent storm, in which the lightnings, instead of limited flashes, were diffused through the whole atmosphere. They were equally dispersed with hail and bloody rain, and spread devastation wherever the tempest fell. The earth denotes the Roman empire. The third part of the trees signifies not all the trees of one-third of the territory, but a third of the trees on that part over which the tempest swept. All the grass was destroyed wherever the storm fell. It was natural that a growth so frail as green grass should be wholly destroyed by a heat sufficient to burn one-third of the trees. What now, in order to accord with the symbol, must be the characteristics of that which it denotes? It must be a combination of mighty and destructive agents. It must descend on the apocalyptic earth from without. It must, on fulfilling its office, disappear, or mingle with the surrounding elements, as hail, rain and fire, when cast to the earth, soon enter into new combinations or assume new forms of existence. It must belong to some other department than the physical world and exert its agency on some different and analogous class of objects. We find a most exact and conspicuous agreement with all these characteristics in the Gothic hordes who invaded the Roman empire about the beginning of the fifth century. They entered the empire from without. They were forced into it by the more northern hordes, who

violently drove them from their dwellings, as the vapor and electricity of a storm are driven over a territory, not by powers inherent in themselves, but by the wind. Their incursions were marked by a terrible slaughter of the inhabitants, and a destruction of their crops and dwellings. Deprived of food and shelter, the young, the feeble and the aged, which to the stronger are as grass compared to trees, sunk in greater proportion than the active and sturdy. And finally, on fulfilling their office of destruction, they disappeared as organized bodies, either by slaughter and pestilence, or by intermixture with the surviving population, or by a retreat from the empire.

And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. —viii: 8, 9.

This symbol is a volcanic mountain thrown up at a great distance by an explosion of the flaming elements at its base, and then precipitated into the Mediterranean sea. Its burning lava is projected over the neighboring waters, discoloring them by the gleam of its fires or the intermixture of its ashes, strewing them with fish destroyed by its poisonous minerals or heat, and firing the ships or dashing them by the descent of heavy masses. An agent descending into the Roman empire, to correspond with this symbol, must obviously be one

of great power, impelled from its ancient position by an irresistible force, carrying within itself the elements of annoyance and destruction to surrounding objects, assuming a fixed position in the empire, and thence frequently projecting the instruments of devastation and death on the neighboring regions. And such most conspicuously were the Vandals under Genseric, who, forced from their native seats by the Hunns, passed through France and Spain into Africa, conquered the Carthaginian territory, established an independent government, and thence, through a long period, harrassed the islands and shores of the Mediterranean by predatory incursions, intercepting the commerce of the sea, plundering and burning the cities, and slaughtering the inhabitants. They differed from the earlier Gothic armies as widely as a volcano differs in its fixed station and destructive agency, from the rapid movements and transient influence of a burning tornado.

And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.—viii: 10, 11.

The star obviously was not a solid globe, but a thin transparent meteor, which as it swept along near the surface and sank to the ground, still left the objects it enveloped perceptible to the apostle, and were soon absorbed by the waters and the

earth. He beheld the rivers and fountains still running—perceived a change wrought in them by the meteor, and saw that it was the new element infused into them, that rendered them deadly to many of those who, dwelling on their banks at a distance, drank of them. As the scene exhibited to him was the apocalyptic earth, and the waters its real rivers and fountains, the meteor doubtless descended on a part of the Roman empire, where fountains abounded and rivers began their course, and, therefore, on a mountainous region. As the Alps give rise to a number of considerable streams, the angel sounding the trumpet probably stood over their heights, and the meteor fell on the lofty ranges, whence the streams flow, and on the valleys through which they descend to the neighboring seas. The meteor was called the Wormwood, because it embittered the waters, and made them fatal to many, who resided on their borders in the distant regions which they traversed, or where they mingled with the sea.

For the counterpart of this symbol analogy requires us to look to the civil world. As in a great empire like the Roman, embracing many tribes and nations, the central and most numerous people is to distant and tributary communities, what the sea is to the fountains and streams that descend into it, the fountains and streams on which the meteor fell represent communities and tribes at a distance from the capital, which are always de-

scending towards the centre and intermixing with the main population. As the fountains and streams denote those tribes, the men who were killed by their bitter waters are not men of those tribes, but others, dwelling on their banks in the distant countries through which they pass, or in the central population towards which they descend. Otherwise the waters and those who drank them were the same. The symbol thus denotes the descent of a terrible agent on the skirts of the empire, occupied by various communities, and the infusion into their policy of a new element, by which they became destructive to the central population. And such were the characteristics of the Scythian hordes under Attila, and the effects of their invading the northern and western skirts of the empire. Like a meteor descending from the distant regions of the atmosphere, they came from the remote solitudes of Asia. As the elements of the star were soon absorbed by the waters where it fell, so they were wasted, in a large degree, in their disastrous battles with other hordes, and finally were disbanded and absorbed by the tribes of Germany and the Danube on the death of Attila. The military successes of these last tribes caused them to subsist afterwards as separate and independent nations, and to assume relations towards Italy that became the occasion to it of slaughters through a long succession of ages. They thus infused a poisonous element into the streams of population that descended into the inte-

rior. Their warlike youth, left unemployed by their independence, enlisted in large numbers in the Italian armies, became a scourge alike to the people and rulers, and prepared the way for their subjugation. The nations around the Alps, like their rivers, which have never ceased to flow, have continued from age to age to descend into Italy and make it their battle-field, and to waste it with slaughter.

LECTURE FIFTH.

REVELATIONS VIII. : 12-X. : 11.

And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.—viii : 12.

We have seen that the land, the sea, the fountains and streams are used to denote the population of an empire, in their political and military relations. The sun, moon and stars, which preside over the land and sea, and give them light and warmth, represent the rulers who appoint laws to the people, and exert a chief influence in determining their physical and civil conditions. The stroke on the sun, moon and stars, by which a part of them was to be darkened, denotes, therefore, a violent extinction of some of the political organizations of the empire—the third part expressing the proportion of the influence of those that were to be overthrown to the whole. That catastrophe was probably the subversion of the Western imperial government, and the institution in its place of a new rule, by the Heruli, in the year 476.

The two-thirds of the sun, moon and stars that still shone were the corresponding governments of the Eastern Empire, which at that period greatly surpassed the other in strength and splendor, and still continued to shed either a brilliant or a feeble ray through nearly a thousand years.

And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!—viii : 13.

This angel is, like the others that fly through heaven, a symbol, and denotes a class of men who, after the fall of the Western Empire, expressed fears of a similar catastrophe to the Eastern from the Scythian and other distant tribes. They also proclaimed to the churches that antichrist was soon to rise and be overthrown, and that the dawn of the millennial rest was about to commence. At any rate, the writers of that period tell us that through the whole of the sixth century the Eastern Empire was filled with apprehensions, from the attacks of various barbarous tribes that hovered on its skirts, and threatened its speedy overthrow. With this feeling was conjoined the expectation by the church of the advent of the Judge of the world. If this angel does not symbolize these forebodings of the public mind, he represents merely the importance of the remaining revelations. They were to be significant of great and disastrous events.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth *were* as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it *were* breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, *which* is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon. One woe is past; *and*, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.—*Rev. ix: 1-12.*

The meteor (the star) had fallen (πεπρωτοτα) to the earth when first seen by the Apostle. Its head was an intelligent being, to whom was given by its porter the key of the bottomless pit. As the head was an individual, and bore, doubtless, a due proportion to its train, the latter must have been of moderate dimensions. He opened the dungeon gate, and out of the smoke which ascended and filled the atmosphere, locusts went forth to the earth—agents of a different class, and having a

different office, from those constituting the meteor. Their figures were like horses caparisoned for battle. They had faces as of men, hair as of women, and teeth as of lions. They had on breastplates as of iron, crowns as of gold, and such was their multitude that the sound of their wings was like the sound of many chariots of horses rushing to battle. A power was given to them like that of the scorpions of the earth, and they were not to injure the grass, crops, or trees, but only the men who had not the mark of God on their foreheads—and not by slaughter, but by a scorpion torment. They were to exercise their power during five months, the usual period of locusts, and in such a form as to render life insupportable. As they had life, they represented intelligent beings; and as they were of both sexes, and propagated their kind, they denote human beings. The remaining description would show them to be of a usurping, crafty, sensual, voracious and un pitying nature—that they would go forth from their native seat into other lands, and be, therefore, a warlike and an invading nation. The men who were to be injured by them were such as had not the seal of God on their brows, i. e., apostates, who ascribe the prerogatives of God to creatures, and pay to them the homage that is due only to him. An exact and conspicuous agreement with these symbols is found in the Mahometan Saracens. With his small band of associates, Mahomet fled from

Mecca to Medina, like a meteor that falls from the place where it is generated to the earth. He there received liberty to unfold and propagate his opinions, and soon diffused them through Arabia; and they were smoke from the abyss, instead of an effulgence from the sun. The denseness of the cloud from the abyss denotes not only the utter falsehood of his doctrines, but the absoluteness with which they enveloped his followers, excluding every direct ray from heaven, and every refraction from surrounding objects. The disciples of Mahomet entertain no doubts whatever of the propriety of their scheme—never modify it by the adoption of doctrines from others—nor admit the possibility of a higher degree of truth in any antagonist system. From this smoke locusts went forth to the earth. His doctrines generated in his followers that locust disposition, by which they were prompted to go forth from their native seat to other lands—gave them their scorpion power—enjoined it as their office to torture idolaters, to conquer other nations, and to extend the sway of their king. They were not to injure the grass of the earth, nor any thing green, nor any tree, but only the inhabitants. If we are to construe these words literally, this was a singular injunction prophetically laid on these destroyers. And though in this respect they were unlike the literal insect, yet, strange to say, this injunction, almost in the words of the prophecy, was actually given by Abubeker,

a Mahometan leader, to the army invading Syria. "Destroy no palm trees, nor hurt any fields of corn, cut down no fruit trees, nor do mischief to any cattle." Their apparent aims were to differ from those of ordinary warriors. They were not to be ostensibly impelled by desire of power, honor or wealth, but were to profess themselves the special ministers of God to disseminate a new religion, to extirpate idolatry, and to inflict a torturing punishment on apostate and corrupt Christians.

All the subordinate characteristics were united in them, also, and denoted their dispositions and conduct, rather than their personal appearance. Their crowns denoted their daring pretence to right; their human faces implied cunning; their long hair, effeminacy; their lion's teeth, voracity; and their iron breastplates, insensibility to the miseries of their victims. The commission of the Saracens did not, however, allow them to *kill* the body politic of the Greek Empire. They were to torture the apostate men for five months. They dismembered the empire, depriving it of Egypt, Syria, and other provinces, but as often as they approached Constantinople, the heart of the empire, they were repulsed. The scorpion sting of these symbol insects probably refers to the doctrinal poison which the Mahometans infused wherever they went. They sought to instil that poison by giving equal privileges to proselytes of every

nation, while those who rejected their faith had to continue in a suffering and degraded condition. The two-fold character of a military tyrant and a religious impostor is admirably indicated by the teeth of the lion and the sting of the scorpion. The period of five months, during which they were to torture, is explained variously by commentators. One says it refers to the practice of the Saracenic warfare, which seems to have been limited to five months in each year. Another, to the *tormenting* portion of the history of the Saracenic power, which embraced a period of one hundred and fifty years, reckoning each day of the five months as a year. Although it did not then become extinct, yet it may be said no longer to torture. The aggressive and tormenting period of their empire, in which they obtained all their main victories and secured their greatest conquests, occurred between the years 612, when Mahomet began to propagate his doctrines, and 762, when the Caliph Almansor began the city of Bagdad, calling it "the city of peace." A third explains the period thus: The time occupied by the Mahometans, in their course from success to luxury, and from luxury to decay, was to bear the same proportion to the career of victorious nations generally as five months do to the usual life of locusts.

The character of the nations harrassed by them corresponded, also, with the prophecy. They had sanctioned the arrogation of the rights of God

by civil and ecclesiastical rulers, had turned to the open and zealous worship of relics, saints, and images, and had sunk to the lowest depths of profligacy and debasement. Finally, of this numerous and desolating host, Mahomet was the king—an angel from the infernal world to vex the sons of men. The name Abaddon is the Hebrew word for destroyer, and the name Apollyon is a Greek term of the same import. It was given to him in both languages because he was sent as a scourge as well to the Jews as to the Greeks. And how well he executed his commission is seen in the millions that he tormented and deceived.

And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.—ix: 13–21.

The one voice from the four horns of the golden

altar was either a joint voice, formed by voices from the four horns uttering in harmony the command to loose the angels at the Euphrates; or a similar voice uttering successively from each a command to loose one of the angels. The golden altar was that on which incense was offered with the prayers of the saints, and was a symbol of the cross, the instrument of Christ's death, by which men have access to God, and obtain pardon and acceptance. The cry from the horns of that altar denoted, accordingly, a connection of the judgments which those symbolized by the angels were to inflict, with the sacrifice of Christ, and that his honor as mediator required vindication by an infliction of the avenging judgments which the symbol foreshows, on those who had set him aside and substituted others in his place. The Euphrates was, perhaps, visible to the Apostle, and passed apparently beneath the station of the sixth angel. The four angels were leaders of bodies of men, and doubtless of four armies, that, with their successors, constituted the two hundred thousand thousand. The release of the angels from bonds at the Euphrates, simply denotes the removal of obstacles to their invasion of the apocalyptic earth. The analogy is drawn from the relations of the Euphrates to ancient Babylon, and the access which Cyrus and his troops gained to that city by the diversion of the river from its channel. See Is. 45 : 1. Some barrier resembling that, not a mere indisposition,

was to be removed in order to their incursion into the empire. This is indicated by the statement that they had been prepared for the hour, and day, and month, and year; i. e., not merely for the year, but for the very hour to begin the invasion, when the barriers should be removed.

The breastplates of the horsemen, of the color of fire, or flaming red, of hyacinth, or blue, and of sulphur, or bright yellow, denote their vehement and aggressive spirit, and disposition to slaughter and devastation. In the Greek of John the terms are all adjectives, and signify like fire, like the hyacinth, like brimstone, not made of these materials. The lion-like appearance of their horses is intended to depict the destroying effect of their invasions. The fire, smoke and brimstone, issuing out of their mouths, are thought by some to be an allusion to the use of fire arms by the Moslem cavalry. To a person who had never seen a horseman discharge a pistol, the appearance was very similar to that here described. When the Spaniards invaded South America, the impression produced on the inhabitants by their cavalry when they leaned forward on their horses and fired their pistols, was, that the horse and his rider formed a supernatural being, from whose mouth issued "smoke, fire and brimstone." Other commentators think this entire description merely denotes that these invading armies would be to those whom they assailed what fire and smoke and brimstone are to those envel-

oped by them. Both the heads and tails of the horses were destructive, i. e., they would be terrific assailants on the one hand, and subject those who escaped slaughter to a horrible form of suffering on the other.

The nations whom they were to scourge with these plagues were to be worshippers of demons and idols, and those who survived the attack were to continue wholly unreformed. All these descriptions are realized in the Tartar tribes who invaded the eastern Roman Empire, from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. They came from without the apocalyptic earth. They were four different divisions, under their respective leaders. Their entrance into the empire was preceded by the conquest of intermediate enemies, and other events, which gave the chiefs the requisite power. They and their descendants were innumerable in multitude. They were objects of terror beyond any other conquerors, alike to those whom they assailed and those whom they threatened. Like burning whirlwinds, they spread devastation through the scenes of their conquests. They tortured with a serpent venom those whom they conquered. And the nations overrun by them were apostates to idolatry, and remained unreformed by their miseries.

And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth:

and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets. And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.—x: 1-11.

The splendor of the angel's form and aspect denotes the conspicuity of those whom he represents and the effulgence of the light they were to impart to the nations. His setting his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land indicates, that some whom he symbolizes were to cross the ocean to distant islands and continents, and that the agency which they were to exert was to continue through a long period. The seven thunders that followed the utterance of his message, denote violent expressions of thought and passion by those whom the agents he represented were to address. They uttered an intelligible response to his message, as appears from John's procedure to write, and the

direction he received not to write what they had spoken. The loudness denotes the vastness of the multitude by whom that which they symbolized was uttered. That the apostle was about to write it on the assumption that it was prophetic, may perhaps indicate that some persons would regard what they had spoken as inspired. The reason that it was not to be written, doubtless, was that it was not inspired. It was expressive of popular thought and feeling—of much, therefore, that was mistaken and evil, and which, if written, would have led the reader to dangerous misconceptions. The solemn oath of the angel was a response to those thunder voices designed to correct an error, which they had expressed, in regard to the period when the empire of the saints was to be established on earth. *The time shall not be yet*—vs. 6; but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he can proceed to sound, the mystery of God should be finished as he declared to the prophets—vs. 7. The appeal of the angel to God for the truth of his assertion, denotes that those whom he symbolized were to found their teachings, respecting the commencement of that reign, on the word of God alone, and make it the sole rule of their faith and ground of their hope. The mystery of God is his permission of the supremacy of the wild beast and false prophet over the church during the twelve hundred and sixty years, before his descent to establish his kingdom.

In receiving the open book, the apostle acted as a symbol. He represented the recipients, as the angel did the communicators, of revealed truth. His eating it with a sense of sweetness foreshadowed that they should receive and study the volume with eagerness and delight; and the bitterness it excited symbolized the inquietudes, aversions, animosities and contests of which it was to prove to them the occasion. That he must prophesy before many kings, and peoples, and tongues, implies that they should act as witnesses for God in the presence of anti-christian rulers, and the people at large.

All these characteristics point us, most obviously, to the Reformers of the sixteenth century. They were as conspicuous to the men of that age, and invested with as dazzling a splendor, as a mighty angel would have been, descending from heaven, robed in a cloud, and crowned with the brilliancy of a rainbow. They uttered their message with a lion-voice that resounded through all the valleys of Europe—echoed from her remotest mountains, and struck their foes with terror. Their voice drew from great multitudes instantaneous and passionate expressions of thought and feeling, that shook the ecclesiastical and civil governments to their foundations. One of the first and most violent of these utterances was a false pretence to inspiration, and an expression of the belief, that Antichrist would soon fall, and the millennial

kingdom of Jesus would soon be established. That expression prompted the Reformers to correct the error by an appeal to the Scriptures, and a demonstration that Christ is not to come till the sound of the seventh trumpet, as he had announced to his servants the prophets. They delivered to their followers the word of God, open to their perusal by translations into their several languages, and reduced in size and cost by the art of printing. Like the angel, they urged men to receive and study it as the only authoritative revelation of the divine will. The Bible was received and studied by their followers with the utmost eagerness and delight, but diversities of opinion and fierce contentions soon sprang up that distracted the Protestant churches, and embittered their spiritual joys. The Reformers and their successors have fulfilled the office of witnesses for God in opposition to the usurpations of the wild beast and false prophet, and they are to continue to sustain that office till the mystery of God is finished.

It would be easy to verify all these statements by evidence from history, did our limits permit. We will close by a few general remarks :

1. During the long period that intervened between the reign of Constantine and the fifteenth century, the church as a body (so called) had become awfully corrupt in doctrine and manners. One single fact will illustrate the condition of things. Absolution from past sins, and indulgence

to commit future sins, were sold by the priests to the people at a stipulated price. More than forty editions of the "Tax Lists" are still extant, in which the amount to be paid for the most horrid crimes is prescribed. One price was affixed for murder, another for perjury, another for incest, and so on. Such was the state of things, when God raised up a German Monk—the world-famed Martin Luther—who with his associates, exposed the corruptions of his day, and introduced a purer system of faith and a higher standard of morals. In 1522 he published his translation of the New Testament—a little book, and open for the perusal of all. From that period the great and leading distinction between the true and false religions has ever been, and still is this:—the one directs the people to the Bible to learn a creed—the other sets up its creed by authority of councils and the fathers, and either withholds the Bible entirely, or distorts its obvious meaning to support the creed.

2. There is, perhaps, nothing which God hates with so much abhorrence as he does a perverted religion. In the Jewish nation he denounced the sorest vengeance on those that corrupted his institutions, vitiated his ordinances, and led away his people into idolatrous practices. Under the gospel dispensation, he has, with unvarying precision, attached his woes to those who make void his will by inculcating human tradition. A corrupt Christianity has filled the world with lamentation, and

mourning, and woe. It has occasioned more persecution and bloodshed than open and avowed paganism and infidelity. It has veiled the truth from the eyes of the world, and caused thousands to die in profound ignorance of the way of salvation, though born in Christendom.

3. Nor is it sufficient to belong to the true church. We may study and understand the gospel and still not love its truths, and not obey its precepts. Let us aim to conform our *most secret affections* to the holy will of God—to regulate all our secular and all our religious conduct by his precepts, and to dedicate our whole lives to the one object—*his glory*. And let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen !

LECTURE SIXTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XI.

And there was given me a reed like unto a rod : and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not ; for it is given unto the Gentiles : and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.—*Rev. xi : 1, 2.*

The scene of this action was obviously the earth also, to which the Apostle had descended to receive from the rainbow-angel the little book. Jerusalem, with its temple and courts, was displayed, therefore, before him. The rod is the symbol of the revealed will of the Deity, in conformity with which the temple was built. The temple was the edifice erected by his command, in which worship was publicly offered. It consisted of the holy of holies and the sanctuary. The former symbolized the heavens, where God visibly manifests his presence ; the latter, the places on earth in which the true worshippers offer him their homage. The altar on which incense, the symbol of prayer, was offered, represented the cross of Christ, the medium of reconciliation and access to God ; and the

worshippers denoted those who conduct the worship which he has appointed. To measure the temple, then, was to learn the truths taught in the Scriptures, and symbolized first by the inner sanctuary, respecting the throne of God in heaven, the exaltation and intercession of Christ in his presence, and the relations to him there of the spirits of the redeemed, denoted by the cherubim. It was to learn, also, the truths symbolized by the outer sanctuary, respecting the places on earth which he has appointed for his worship—respecting the expiation on which they are to rely for pardon and acceptance, denoted by the altar, and respecting the ministers who conduct the worship he enjoins, represented by the offerers of the worship in the sanctuary. The court which was on the outside, was that in which the congregation stood while incense was offered, and denoted the station of the congregation of visible worshippers, in contradistinction from theirs who conduct public worship. To reject it as no part of the temple, was, therefore, to reject the body of the visible as not true worshippers. The command to reject it was equivalent to a prophecy that the nominal was not to be the true church—that the vast crowds who were to throng the court, professedly to pay homage to God, were not to be his adorers. The prediction that this court should be given to the Gentiles, and that they should tread the holy city forty-two months, denoted that they should constitute the body of

visible worshippers during that period, and exercise the civil polity under which the church should subsist. And as during the continuance of the temple, the Gentiles were aliens from God, and idolaters, in contradistinction from the Jews, who were his covenant people, it denotes that the visible should be an apostate and idolatrous church during that period, and give occasion thereby for the testimony of the witnesses to the truth against false teachers and persecuting rulers. If this is the true exposition of the passage, it excludes the papal church from being a "portion of the real kingdom of Christ. It also places the Church of England in an awkward position. She does not unchurch the Church of Rome, though she charges upon her grievous errors. And why not unchurch her? Because, forsooth, she derives from that church her episcopal ordination, and she sees no method of defending its validity or of tracing it in unbroken succession up to the Apostles, except by admitting the authority of those from whom and through whom she professes to have received that succession. But in the passage before us that community is left out of the measurement, as no part of the temple of God. It is not Mount Zion, but Babylon. Some of God's people might be found in her, but they are commanded to come out. She is not the bride, the Lamb's wife, but the mother of harlots. If the church of Rome continued, after she assumed the work of persecution, to be the

true church of Christ, what must be that body who fled from her persecutions into the wilderness? This argument is decisive. The kingdom of God could not have been divided against itself.

And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* three-score days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.—xi : 3, 4.

The promise to give power to the two witnesses, referred to such gifts as were requisite to qualify them for their office. To prophesy as a witness, is to proclaim the revealed will of God, and to vindicate his prerogatives against false teachers and usurping rulers. The period of their testimony was to correspond to the apostacy of the church, twelve hundred and sixty days—forty-two months of thirty days each being the same. A day in prophecy being a year in history, this period is evidently twelve hundred and sixty years. Sackcloth is a symbol of humiliation and sorrow. To prophesy in sackcloth, therefore, denoted their witnessing for God in humiliation, under a profound sense of his rights and grief at the apostacy of his professing people. The two olive trees and two lamps, which symbolize the two witnesses, are those exhibited in vision to Zechariah—iv : 4, 11, 14. The trees that distilled the oil into the lamps, represented the teachers, and the lamps, that received the oil, represented those that embraced their doctrine. The two witnesses, then, are the

teachers, and the recipients of the truth, in whom it exerts and displays its power, as the oil transmitted from the olive trees to the lamps burned and diffused its light through the temple. This exposition of the witnesses, and of the period of their testimony, accords beautifully with a prophecy of Daniel. Speaking of this time, he says, "A little horn shall grow up among the ten horns, that should wear out the saints of the Most High until a time, times and the dividing of time," i. e., for a year, two years and half a year, making three and one-half years=fifty-two months=twelve hundred and sixty days. According to John, the witnesses, during this period, were to prophesy in sackcloth, and to be persecuted and slain. According to Daniel, the saints were to be worn out during the same period. The saints of Daniel and the two witnesses of John are, therefore, the same.

And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.—xi : 5, 6.

The fire proceeding from their mouths to devour their enemies, is a prediction that they should defend themselves from their persecutors by their words, as witnesses for God, and by these alone; and that the threatenings of vengeance which they

were to proclaim from his Word were to be fulfilled on his enemies. All who have perseveringly set themselves against the gospel have been slain by it, not only as incurring the wrath to come, but frequently temporal and spiritual judgments—the presages of eternal death. That the witnesses had power to shut heaven, that rain should not fall, and to turn water into blood, denotes that the denunciation of terrible judgments on apostates was to be an eminent part of their office. There is a plain allusion to Elijah, whose prayer against Israel was followed by a dearth of rain, and to Moses, whose prayers against Pharaoh converted the waters of the Nile into blood, and produced other grievous plagues. By these expressions, we need not understand that miracles were still to follow the supplications of believers. These examples are adduced as specimens of the efficacy of prayer, and though the era of miracles is past, yet the agonizing petitions of God's suffering children may still draw down temporal calamities on persecuting nations. Their ministry often receives from God the most evident sanctions, in the destruction of those who, though faithfully warned, persist in apostacy. The agency symbolized by the measuring of the temple had an exact counterpart in the ministry of the Reformers and their successors. The great truths which they drew from the Scriptures, and proclaimed in opposition to the apostate church, were precisely those that were symbolized

by the inner and outer sanctuary—that God alone has the rights of deity, and is the object of worship, in opposition to antichrist, to canonized creatures, and to idols—that Christ's sacrifice is the only expiation for sin, in contradistinction to the sacrifice of the mass and voluntary inflictions—that he is the only intercessor, in opposition to saints and angels—that the spirits of the redeemed pass immediately into His presence after death, instead of into purgatory—that acceptable worship may be offered wherever two or three assemble in the name of Christ, in opposition to the idea that homage can only be offered in houses consecrated by superstitious rites, and sanctified by the presence of relics, images, &c.—and finally, that they are legitimate conductors of worship who are publicly set apart to that office, and who proclaim the truths and present the homage which God enjoins, in opposition to the dogma that those alone are the true ministers who derive their authority from the pope, or from patriarchs, or from bishops. The prediction of treading the holy city by the Gentiles during twelve hundred and sixty years, and of the prophecy of the witnesses in sackcloth, has also had a conspicuous fulfilment. That period commenced in the early part of the seventh century. The Greek and Latin communions had then openly apostatized from God, paying to creatures, and even to images, the worship due only to him. They have continued and advanced in that

apostacy through all subsequent ages. On the other hand, at every period of that long night of idolatry and persecution, God raised up a few witnesses, both teachers and recipients of their doctrine, who proclaimed the truth, in opposition to those errors, and denounced the judgments which God has threatened to inflict on the idolatrous church, and on persecuting civil rulers. Such were many of the Paulicians, the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Wickliffites, the Lollards, and the Bohemians, and such have been a vast number of the Protestants for the last three hundred years.

And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.—xi : 7-14.

The witnesses would finish their testimony before the close of the twelve hundred and sixty years, doubtless under the apprehension that it was no

longer to be necessary—that the great changes wrought in public opinion and in the condition of the apostate church, divested it of its dangerous power, and insured its speedy overthrow—and that they might, therefore, turn to the happier task of proclaiming the truth to those who never heard its glad tidings. And such was the persuasion of the Protestants generally on the subversion of the French hierarchy and the conquest of the papal states towards the close of the last century. That the priesthood could so far recover from its depression, as it has already done, resume its influence over most of the cabinets, and renew a persecution of the witnesses, was neither anticipated, nor regarded as possible. The Protestants accordingly commenced their great efforts for the conversion of the world, and continue generally to the present hour to cherish confident expectations of success. The wild beast that ascends out of the abyss is the symbol of the persecuting civil rulers of the Gentile nations that tread the holy city forty-two months. Its usurping career is not to terminate till the close of the forty-two months. Its judgment, however, is already begun, and it is in the exasperation and despair to which future judgments will drive it that it is to endeavor to purchase support or disarm opposition by slaughtering the witnesses. As the event symbolized by the slaughtering of the witnesses is yet future, it becomes us to speak with modesty of the precise

meaning of this slaughter. I incline to adopt the opinion that *the slaughtering of the witnesses is to be literal*. It is a law of symbolization that when any event presents no analogy to any other event, that event is made the representative of itself. Now, the death of the witnesses could find no condition of life, no variation of existence, that is adapted to symbolize that change, and hence it is employed to symbolize itself. In other words, it is to be literally understood. The city in whose streets their dead bodies are to be exposed is the great city Babylon, the associated teachers and rulers of the nationalized churches. Its character is pointed out by the names it bears. It is a Sodom for its filthiness, an Egypt for its intolerance and idolatry, and a Jerusalem for its malignant hatred of the Lord Jesus Christ. The place where Christ was crucified was an open elevated space, without the walls of Jerusalem, and on one of the principal entrances to the city. The street where the dead bodies of the witnesses are to be placed, represents, therefore, parts of the ten kingdoms bearing the same relation of importance to the apostate hierarchies, that the great entrance to Jerusalem did to that city—i. e., parts of those kingdoms from which those hierarchies largely derive their sustenance, wealth and worshippers. The people and nations who gaze on their bodies, are the subjects of the wild beast who approve their slaughter. The refusal to allow their burial, implies that there are to be per-

sons who will desire to perform for them that office, and yields additional proof that their death is to be literal. The exultation over them and mutual congratulations of those who dwell on the earth, imply that they are to deem them and their adherents as forever silenced. They will think themselves freed from the annoyances of a refutation of their principles and a censure of their conduct with which the two prophets tormented them.

In this slaughter all the witnesses are to fall. As the two symbol witnesses represent all who are to fulfil their office, and as the symbol war was made on both of them, and they were both slain, their death must be regarded as symbolizing the death of all whom they represent. There is no indication that any are to escape. They are all exhibited as dead and denied a burial, and all are raised and called to heaven in a cloud. The exultation of their enemies at their slaughter and exposure to the public gaze, indicates that they are to be regarded as totally destroyed. As they are the same as the 144,000 sealed of all the tribes of Israel, the persecution is to extend to all the denominations of the church that contain true believers, and is to be common to all the ten kingdoms. It implies also that the persecuting powers are to act in concert, and agree beforehand in respect to the time of the slaughter, and the preservation and exposure of the dead bodies. What a tremendous crisis that is to be when all evangel-

ical teachers and confessors who faithfully maintain allegiance to God, and refuse submission to the usurping powers of the State, are thus to be exterminated, and not an individual left openly to resist the wild beast and false prophet and to vindicate the rights of God! What an exasperation of those anti-christian powers it bespeaks! What an impious defiance of the Almighty! The three days and a half—the period of the exposure and exultation—are to be understood symbolically as three and a half years. Their resurrection is then literally, publicly and miraculously to occur. It is not to spring from any agency of their friends, who would have buried them, nor from any political revolution, nor from any natural cause. The spirit of life from God is to enter into them, and they are to stand on their feet and overwhelm with fear those who witness the spectacle. They are then to hear a great voice from heaven, saying, “Ascend hither;” and while their enemies shall behold, they will ascend to heaven in the cloud of the divine presence. Their assumption to heaven is to be a wholly different event from their resurrection. But like that, it is to be, not the result of their exertion or contrivance, nor the work of their friends, but of God. It is to be literal, visible and supernatural. Their resurrection and ascension, therefore, are to be a public and stupendous testimony of God to their truth and fidelity, and a refutation of the calumnies of their persecutors. They are to

be felt to be such. For as an instant consequence there is to be a great earthquake, by which the tenth of the city is to be thrown down, and seven thousand *men of name* killed. An earthquake denotes a sudden and violent revolution of the feelings of a people in respect to their government, in which their rulers are ejected from their stations and their ancient institutions overthrown. The tenth of the city is the tenth of the hierarchies denoted by the great city. It is the hierarchy, therefore, of one of the ten kingdoms. Its fall is to be the consequence of a political revolution of a persecuting government symbolized by the wild beast. The fall of a hierarchy is its fall from its station as a national establishment. The slaughter, by the earthquake, of seven thousand men of name, is the destruction, doubtless, of all the men of chief station in that civil government. The resurrection and the ascension of the witnesses, then, is to prove so powerfully that they are the true worshippers of God, and that their persecutors are guilty of an impious invasion of his rights in assuming authority over their worship, that the people will no longer submit to such a usurped dominion over their consciences, but will hurl from their stations those who had been guilty of such arrogance. A similar change of feeling is to extend to the religious establishment. Its principles, its spirit and its agency, are to be seen to be those of anti-Christ—it is immediately to sink, in

the judgment and feeling of all, to the rank of an apostate—its dignitaries are to be slain along with the tyrannical civil rulers—and their associates who survive, overwhelmed by these proofs, are to give glory to the God of heaven by acknowledging his exclusive right to appoint the faith and homage of his creatures.

When these events shall have taken place, the second woe will have passed, and the period of the third woe will have approached.

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.—xi : 15-19.

The angelic hosts here announce that their Lord and his Messiah have entered on the empire of the world, and shall reign as its king forever and ever. It is to be a new era, therefore, in the government of the earth, the commencement by Christ of a widely different and an eternal administration. The great acts that are to mark its introduction are celebrated by the elders. They give thanks to the Self-existent, the Eternal and the Almighty—that

he has exercised his supreme right through the long period from the creation, during which the nations were angry—that the time is come to show his wrath at their rebellion—to judge and to reward his servants and to destroy those who destroy the earth. The holy dead are now to be raised from the grave, freed in full from the penalty of sin, and publicly adopted as heirs of his kingdom. The living who fear his name, both small and great, are to be placed under a new administration and to receive the gift of transfiguration promised to those who shall be living at his advent. The opening of the inner temple and the exhibition of the ark of the covenant, denote, probably, that the mysteries of the former administration are finished, that thenceforth the reasons of his conduct are to be understood, and especially that he is to reign visibly to his people on earth, complete the redemption of the sanctified, and exalt them to more intimate relations to himself.

The lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquake and hail that followed, denote excitements and revolutions among the nations and the descent among them of destroying judgments.

The seventh trumpet, then, is to be followed by three momentous events—first, the beginning of the visible reign of Christ; second, the resurrection of all the pious dead and the acceptance of all the righteous living to the honors of his kingdom; and third, the destruction of the wild beast and false

prophet and all their wicked supporters. All these events may occupy a long period in their accomplishment. The seventh trumpet, the seventh vial and the sixth seal, all foreshadow the same general events.

This view is confirmed by Daniel vii: 13, 14, 18, 22, 27; 1 Cor. xv: 51; 1 Thes. iv: 15. The wicked dead will remain for the present in their graves!

LECTURE SEVENTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XII.

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven ; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars : and she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.—*Rev. xii : 1-6.*

The woman is the representative of the true people of God. This is evident from the persecution she endures from the dragon, her flight into the desert, and her subsistence there through the period during which the witnesses prophecy. The church is comparable to a female clad in the garments of light. The sun of righteousness illumines her countenance—the shadowy dispensation of Judaism is under her feet, and the twelve stars—the doctrines and examples of the twelve apos-

bles—adorn her brow. Possibly these ornaments may indicate merely her greatness, conspicuousness and majesty. Her cry and labor to bear, denote the importunate desire of the church to give to the empire a son who should rise to supreme power, rule the nations with an iron sceptre, and secure for Christianity toleration and peace.

The great red dragon symbolizes the rulers of the Roman empire, the seven heads denoting the seven orders of its ancient rulers, the ten horns the chiefs of the kingdoms into which its western half was divided. Its sweeping its tail through the sky, and casting one-third of the stars to the earth, represents its violent dejection of one-third of the Christian teachers from their stations. Its standing before the woman to devour her offspring, indicates that the rulers suspected that the people of God would favor the elevation to the throne of a Christian prince, and that their design was to destroy the object of their favor as soon as he might be known. Her bearing a male child who should rule the nations with an iron sceptre, denotes that the people of God were partial to one who was a candidate for the imperial throne, and who was destined both to ascend it and to repress their pagan persecutors with an iron sway. His being caught up to God and to His throne, denotes that he was rescued in a remarkable manner from the attempts of the pagan emperors to destroy him, and that being exalted to supreme power, he became

a usurper of the rights of God, and an object of idolatrous homage to his subjects. That the woman fled into the desert, signifies that the people of God, disappointed in their expectation of a more favorable rule from monarchs professing to be Christian, and exposed to greater evils than they had suffered from their pagan persecutors, were compelled, in order to safety, to retire from the nationalized church into seclusion. That she was to be nourished there twelve hundred and sixty days, denotes that they were to continue in seclusion, upheld by the special care of God, through a period of twelve hundred and sixty years. As the woman is the representative of a multitude and a succession of believers, so the man-child represents a dynasty or succession of princes. That the actors and agencies foreshown in this vision are not subsequent to the seventh trumpet, is manifest from the symbols. That trumpet is the signal of the overthrow of the Roman Empire in its last form, and the establishment of Christ's everlasting kingdom on earth. But this symbol exhibits the government of that empire in its power, as the diadems—the badges of imperial rule—indicate, and at an early period, as the woman's seclusion for twelve hundred and sixty years indicates. There is evidently, therefore, the beginning of a new chronological series with this vision. And it refers to the period of Constantine and his successors. Just before his accession to the throne,

there was a period of persecution, during which, great numbers of the Christian teachers were struck from their stations, as the stars were swept by the dragon from the sky, and consigned to the prisons, to the mines and to martyrdom. The people of God were led by the tolerance of his father, to desire that Constantine might be elevated to the imperial rank, in the hope that he would restrain the pagan persecutions. He was the first of the series represented by the man-child. The emperors were alarmed at these desires of the Christians towards Constantine, and at his kind feelings towards the church, and attempted to destroy him, but he was extricated from their plots and raised to imperial power. He became in that station a usurper of the rights of God, by assuming an absolute authority over the religion of his Christian subjects. He prescribed their faith and worship, and made their obligations to God subordinate to his control, and dependent on his will for their efficiency. He assembled synods, and dictated what topics they should discuss and adjudge, and then treated their decrees as dependent on his authority for their ratification. He endeavored to compel his subjects to acquiesce in his faith. To this end he issued a decree prohibiting all assemblies of dissentients from the Catholic Church—confiscating their property and suppressing their books. He accordingly deposed and appointed bishops at his pleasure; and he even banished some of them to dis-

tant provinces, and threatened others with death. He claimed the express sanction of God in these acts, and thereby arrogated an absolute right to legislate over the laws of God. He incorporated the Catholic Church with the national government—constituted himself its civil head—gave it the right to purchase and hold property—released its ministers from liability to civil offices, from the payment of taxes, and from the jurisdiction of the civil courts. He made provision for their support from the public treasury. And along with all these usurpations, he introduced a flood of superstitions, errors and idolatries, which debased the church, offended the true worshippers, and forced them to withdraw from the national establishment, in order to maintain the truths of the gospel, and to offer a pure homage. A body of the true people of God, thus disappointed in their hopes, retired into seclusion—continued for many ages withdrawn from notoriety, and still subsist in total separation from the apostate church. Such are the Waldenses and others of different names, but kindred faith. They have had a ministry of their own, consisting only of elders and deacons, and perpetuated by their own ordination. They have held the great doctrines of the gospel, as evangelical Protestants now hold them, and have been distinguished for simplicity, purity and piety of manners; and finally they have been preserved and nourished in the valleys of the Alps and elsewhere;

by the peculiar care of Divine Providence. With the exception of the Jews, no people have ever been preserved through so vast a period without a change of institutions, principles, or manners.

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. —xii: 7-12.

This serpent is obviously a different being from the great red dragon which endeavored to devour the man-child. He is not said to have seven heads, ten horns, a tail that swept the stars, and an appetite for flesh. Instead of this, he is called the old serpent, the devil and Satan, that deceiveth the whole world—titles that belong only to the great apostate spirit. He has subordinates of a similar nature also, that fight under his standard—while his opponents are Michael, the archangel, and his subordinate angels. Here, then, are two classes of spirits exhibited as waging war with each other in heaven. Satan and his hosts, unable to maintain their ground, are at length driven from heaven and

dejected to the earth. That they are both representatives of men, is clear from the song in heaven which exhibits the conquerors as not loving their lives unto death—a remark suited to men and martyrs, not to angels—and as overcoming their adversaries by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony—language which is predicable only of witnesses for God and believers in Christ. Michael and his angels, therefore, are symbols of believers in Christ—who gain a victory by faith in his blood, by proclaiming his word and by submitting to martyrdom rather than swerve from fidelity to him. And the victory is thought to indicate the approach of the kingdom of God and the triumphant reign of Christ. Satan and his angels, on the other hand, symbolize unbelievers and pagan priests, who try by contradiction or persecution to destroy their testimony and to maintain the supremacy of idolatry. Inasmuch as Satan accused their brethren before God, the question between them must have been one of religion, not of political power.

The kingdom of God chanted by the voice from heaven as at hand, is evidently that in which Messiah is to reign. That chant was uttered by the victors, and indicates that the church was to regard its growth to a majority as insuring the speedy advent of Christ. The heavens summoned to rejoice are the new heavens—the symbol of the risen and glorified saints, who are to descend with the

Redeemer and reign with him as kings. They who dwell in those heavens are the sanctified nations who are to live under their sway. On the other hand, the land and the sea on which the woe is denounced, denote the nations at rest and in agitation prior to the establishment of that millennial kingdom. That the descent of Satan and his angels was to be a woe to the earth and to the sea, indicates that the decline of the pagan party into a minority was to exasperate its priests and rulers and lead them to more violent methods to overwhelm their antagonists. The period of this contest was anterior to the retreat of the church into the wilderness and the commencement of the twelve hundred and sixty years.

This angel war, then, was symbolic of the struggle between the faithful teachers of the gospel, on the one hand, and the pagan priests and persecuting rulers on the other, in behalf of their respective religions. It occurred just before Constantine ascended the throne, and resulted in his espousal of the cause of the Christians and in the rejection of paganism as the religion of the State. The very cruelties of the heathen, and the constancy, meekness and joy of the Christians, tended to produce this result. Both parties considered the question at issue in the contest to be, which of their religions was genuine and to prevail. The triumph of the gospel and the legal recognition of Christianity by Constantine inspired a general per-

suasion that the happy period denoted by the millennium was at hand. Historians describe the church as uniting in thanksgivings for deliverance and congratulations at the overthrow of idolatry and the speedy approach of Christ's kingdom. At the same time, the prediction of a woe to the land and sea had a signal fulfillment in the increased violence of pagan chiefs towards their subjects to prevent their submission to the victorious faith. The dying struggles of paganism were fitly prefigured by the language, "for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.—xii: 13-17.

The dragon who followed (ἐδίωξε) the woman symbolizes the pagan priests and their abettors, who had been defeated in their attempt to maintain their idol-worship, and had fallen into the minority. Their following after her (not persecuting her) denotes their attempt to join her society by a profession of Christianity.

The serpent that cast water from its mouth was

not the devil that fought with Michael, the symbol of the pagan party, but the monster dragon of seven heads, that denoted the civil rulers. This is apparent from that act which is appropriate to an inhabitant of water, but not to an angelic being. It represents the rulers of the Roman empire, therefore, from the elevation of Constantine onwards—embracing both the western and the eastern dynasties.

The gift to the woman of the wings of an eagle denotes, that aids were granted her in her flight that were supernatural and peculiarly suited to bear her above the dangers with which she was threatened by the intrusion of pagans into the church. As the wings were an addition to her body and became a part of her nature, they denote not an exterior instrument, but gifts that formed a part of herself—intellectual and spiritual gifts, therefore, as knowledge, faith, wisdom, constancy and love, by which she was borne above the torrent of false doctrines and superstitious rites in which the dragon aimed to engulf her. These false doctrines were symbolized by the flood of water cast from the dragon's mouth. The earth which absorbed that flood and thus helped the woman, denotes the people generally of the empire. By eagerly embracing the religion thus adulterated to their taste, and by their exulting reception of its pomps, they occupied the attention of the rulers, and allowed the small body of dissenters to escape

from their sight. Her retreat into her place from the face of the serpent, denotes that the scene of her residence was unknown to the rulers. The anger of the serpent indicates their continued disposition to destroy her if in their power, while its going on to make war with the rest of her seed, denotes that they continued, after her disappearance, to persecute the isolated individuals that from time to time dissented from the corrupt church and professed the pure faith.

The phrase, "a time, times and half a time," the period during which the woman was nourished in the wilderness, denotes twelve hundred and sixty years—i. e., a year, two years and half a year=twelve hundred and sixty days, representing as many years. These symbols, then, indicate, that on the usurpation by Constantine and his successors of authority over the church, the pure worshippers began to dissent, to withdraw from the public assembly and to worship apart; that on the nationalization of the church a crowd of pagans soon entered it; that a vast torrent of corrupt doctrines and rites was introduced into its faith and worship by the emperors and their subordinates, that threatened to bear away the true people of God, from the impulse of which they were signally protected; that a body of them retired from the observation of the rulers, into a place where they were sustained for a long period, and that the rulers continued to wreak their mal-

ice on the individuals who rose occasionally in the empire and dissented from the popular faith.

All these symbols, as thus explained, had a signal fulfillment, from Constantine through a long succession of ages. History shows—

1. That when the church became nationalized, a vast body of pagans entered it, and thus verified the prediction, that after being cast to the earth they would follow the woman. Eusebius speaks of “the indescribable hypocrisy of those who entered the church and deceitfully assumed the Christian name.” Christianity became the religion of the court, and a profession of it a passport to office and honor. Corruption was the legitimate consequence.

2. That Constantine and his successors introduced a flood of false doctrines into the church which swept thousands into the vortex of apostacy. Such were the veneration of the cross, the homage of relics, the invocation of saints, the conversion of religion into gorgeous ceremonies, the encouragement of celibacy, and the arrogation of the rights of God by civil and ecclesiastical rulers.

3. That soon after these superstitions began to prevail, God raised up many who disapproved of them, and when efforts were made to coerce them into the adoption of these false views and practices, they submitted to various forms of persecution, rather than renounce their primitive faith. They were deposed from their stations, subjected to tor-

ture, deprived of their goods, banished from their country, and many of them put to death. Finally, as a body, they retired into the wilderness.

4. As it was by spiritual aids that the true worshippers were enabled to resist these temptations, and to fly to the desert, no specific record of those aids is to be sought on the page of history. The facts are, that a body of dissenters from the corrupt church was found in the valleys of the Alps at a later age—that they are known from the testimony of Catholic writers to have existed there as early as the 11th century—that it was then, and is now claimed by themselves, and admitted by their enemies, that they had subsisted there from a much earlier age—that they were organized into churches—that they regarded the Scriptures as a revelation from God, and a rule of faith—that they had a ministry of their own, and were distinguished by the simplicity and purity of their lives. They have been preserved there, and nourished by extraordinary means.

5. That the population at large received, with the utmost eagerness, the corrupt religion dictated by the emperors. Not a single conspicuous prelate appears to have objected to their measures. The great body of ecclesiastics and members on the contrary exulted in the prosperity which seemed thus to be bestowed on the church. This circumstance satisfied the rulers in a measure, and rendered it easier for obscure individuals who dissented to escape

their notice, and to retire into remote solitudes. Here they have maintained the pure worship of God.

6. That the existence of a body of dissenters from the Catholic Church was for ages unknown to the persecuting authorities.

7. And, finally, that they oppressed such individuals as from time to time rejected the errors of the established church, and maintained an evangelical faith and worship. Let us close with a few reflections:

1. What a singular vigilance God has ever kept over his church! Sometimes it has seemed nearly overwhelmed with destruction, but deliverance has arisen from sources whence it was least expected. In seasons of depression, Zion has often exclaimed in unbelief, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me!" But his gracious response hath been, "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."

2. Worldly prosperity is often a snare to the church. This is applicable alike to individuals and to the collective body. Pride, and luxury, and pomp, follow in the train of secular authority and of worldly popularity. The most wicked men will join the church when it is fashionable. On the

contrary, persecution has been a great purifier of the disciples. It has caused them to die to sin, to be crucified to the world, and to cherish a more intimate communion with God.

3. As we are now free from this annoyance, let us guard against the insidious smiles of the world—the stupifying influence of fashionable religion—and since God does not chastise us into holiness, let us seek it by a diligent use of his own appointed means—especially the study of his precious word.

LECTURE EIGHTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XIII : 1-10.

And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion : and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death ; and his deadly wound was healed ; and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast ? who is able to make war with him ? And there was given unto him a month speaking great things and blasphemies ; and power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them : and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity : he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.—*Rev. xii : 1-10.*

The wild beast is a symbol of rulers. This is manifest from the badges of royalty ascribed to it—crowns, a throne and great authority. It is a symbol of cotemporaneous rulers, obviously, from its ten horns with their diadems, which represent se-

parate dynasties. It symbolizes a combination of dynasties that succeed a dominion formerly exercised by the dragon. This is evident, from its receiving from the dragon its power, its throne and great authority. It is indicated also by the seven heads, which are representatives of the same species of rulers that are symbolized by the heads of the dragon. That dragon, you will remember, wore the diadems on his heads, (xii: 3) this wild beast, rising from the sea, wears them on his horns (verse 1). This change denotes that those orders of supreme rulers which the seven heads represented, are no longer in authority, but are succeeded by the new dynasties prefigured by the horns. In other words; both the beast of this chapter, and that of chapter xii: 3 represent the rulers of the Roman Empire; but that refers to it as governed by seven orders of rulers—this, as divided among ten kingdoms. The body of the wild beast was like a leopard's, its feet like a bear's, and its mouth like a lion's—a union of the utmost agility, with the greatest strength to grasp and appetite to devour. All this indicated a combination of aggressive, bloody and insatiable tyrants. That one of its heads was wounded to death, and its death-wound healed, denotes that one of the successions of rulers symbolized by its heads, was cut off by the sword, and supplanted by one of the others for a time, but afterwards restored. That the whole earth wondered after the beast, indicates

that the whole population of the ten kingdoms regarded the monarchs whom it represents, with admiration and awe, and eulogized the heroism of their exploits and the wisdom of their rule. That they worshipped the dragon because it gave it authority, implies that they regarded the important rights which their monarchs exercised as derived from the dragon, and as lawfully assumed by them because they had been arrogated and exercised by that ancient rule. That their ascriptions to the dragon and wild beast of that authority as legitimate was worship, denotes that the assumption of that authority was an arrogation of the prerogatives of God, and their assent to it, therefore, the ascription to them of a homage due only to Him. That arrogation of His rights is denoted also by the names of blasphemy on the heads of the dragon, and by the blasphemies of His name, which the wild beast is represented as uttering. The name of God is descriptive of what he is in his relations to his creatures, and is the symbol thence of his peculiar attributes and prerogatives. The wild beasts' blasphemy of his name, then, is its denial to him of his peculiar prerogatives, and the claiming of them as its own. The tabernacle was the tent erected by the command of God, as the place of offering the worship which he enjoined. The inner sanctuary symbolized the heaven in which he manifests himself and receives the homage of the spirits of the just made perfect, and of

the angelic hosts. The main sanctuary, in which worship was offered by the priests and Levites, represented the places in which the ministers of the Christian Church presented acceptable worship. To calumniate his tabernacle, therefore, was to ascribe to it something inconsistent with its office, and detracting from his honor. Of this kind was the representation of the heavens as the residence of other beings besides himself who are entitled to worship. Such also is the declaration that edifices in which idols are placed, and in which homage is paid to other objects than God, are the proper places of the worship which the church on earth is to offer. To blaspheme those who dwell in heaven was in like manner to calumniate them as claiming the attributes and prerogatives of God, and as desiring and receiving a religious homage that is due only to him. That it was given to it to make war with the saints and to overcome them, denotes that it persecuted the pure worshippers who refused submission to its claims, and inflicted on them what evils it pleased. That it had authority over every tribe and people, and tongue and nation, and was worshipped by all, except the true people of God, signifies that all the nations ruled over by the monarchies which it represents, submitted to their arrogations of the rights of God, and that none dissented, and acknowledged and vindicated the prerogatives of the Almighty, but those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life.

That he who led into captivity was himself to become a captive; and he that slew with the sword must himself be slain, indicates that those who should defend themselves by force against the religious tyranny of those monarchies, would be defeated in their endeavors, and involve themselves in the very evils they attempted to escape. That here is the faith and the patience of the saints, denotes that the true witnesses of God were not, in fulfilling their office, to resort to violence for deliverance from those persecuting tyrants, and for the maintenance of religious freedom, but in meekness and faith content themselves with uttering that testimony for God, which he has promised to make a devouring fire to their enemies.

The period of the wild beasts' triumphant authority, like that of the woman in the desert and the witnesses, was to be forty-two months, the symbol of twelve hundred and sixty years. All these characteristics meet most conspicuously in the Gothic rulers, who established governments in the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century, and their successors and subjects to the present time.

The emergence of the wild beast from the sea is not to be regarded as having been accomplished in a brief space. It occupied such a period as would be required for many separate tribes to come from a distance, to engage in numerous wars, and finally, after victory, to establish new and inde-

pendent governments. Nor are the chiefs who ruled over parts of the empire to be considered as symbolized by the horns while they remained—as in France for a long time—in subordination to Rome. They emerged from the sea as dynasties when they became rulers of portions of the empire in independence of that power. The institution of the horns, therefore, took place at different periods, and they represented those who subsisted when the conquest of the empire was completed, and the imperial power extinguished. History teaches :

1. That on the conquest of Italy and termination of imperial rule, A. D. 476, the barbarians held nearly the whole Western Empire, and were distributed under ten kingly governments, viz : the Vandals, the Suevi, the Visigoths, the Alans, the Burgundians, the Franks, the Britons, the Ostrogoths, the Lombards, and the Heruli. These separate dynasties are united in one symbol, and exhibited as one great combination of usurping tyrants, from the similarity of their claims, policy and rulers. They all adopted, to a great degree, the laws of the ancient empire as their common law. They united in the same usurpation of divine rights, in imposing the same false religion on their subjects, and in similar hatred to the true people of God. They all nationalized the church, and all persecuted dissenters. So much for the ten horns.

2. That these rulers were to their subjects in

strength, ferocity and bloodiness, what an animal would be to its victim, that united in itself, the agility of the leopard, the strength of the bear, and the voracity of the lion.

3. That after the decease of Constantine, the succession of Christian emperors, represented by the seventh head of the wild beast, was interrupted by the death of all those of the family who might naturally have continued the succession. The sceptre, therefore, descended to Julian, the apostate, the only surviving male of the family entitled to it. Immediately after his accession to the throne he publicly disavowed Christianity, re-established the worship of idols, and endeavored to render it again the popular and national faith. Thus one of the heads of the wild beast was, as it were, wounded to death. After a reign of only eighteen months, however, he was removed by death, and the wound of the seventh head was healed by the elevation to the throne of Jovian, a Christian. From this time, the line of Christian emperors continued until the supreme power passed from the Romans to the Goths in the West, and to the Turks at Constantinople.

4. That the population of the empire regarded their rulers with awe and admiration. The common people, sunk for ages to the most degraded vassalage, revered the monarchs, the various ranks of nobles, and their armed followers, as a superior race, while poets and historians celebrated their

warlike exploits, and philosophers and priests justified their usurpations, and eulogized the wisdom and benignity of their rule. Thus all the world wondered after the beast.

5. The people of these kingdoms supposed their monarchs to have derived important rights from the rulers of the ancient empire, symbolized by the heads of the dragon, and to be authorized by their example to arrogate the same powers that they had assumed. Thus they approved of their adopting the laws of the empire, in respect to ecclesiastical affairs, and justified by the example of the emperors, their usurpation of authority over the church, and their persecution of dissenters. Thus the dragon gave to the wild beast his power, and his seat (throne) and great authority.

6. The ancient Roman rulers and the Gothic monarchs were guilty of blasphemy against God, by usurping authority over his rights and laws. They rescinded his commands and institutions, introduced a different code, established new religious rites, constituted creatures, images and relics objects of worship; appointed new mediators and modes of sanctification, and hunted with fire and sword those who refused submission to their will. As God claims exclusive control over the faith and conscience of the creature, those who set up a counter claim accuse him of usurpation. Thus the beast opened his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name.

7. The rulers symbolized by the wild beast traduced the tabernacle of God. They calumniated the heavens of the divine presence by exhibiting them as the residence of many other beings than God, that are entitled to divine worship. Such were the saints and angels whom they invoked. By ascribing to them the attributes of God, and representing them as dwelling in heaven and entitled to worship along with the self-existent and eternal Being, they blasphemed the tabernacle of God.

8. They traduced the places for worship on earth, by representing them to be only such as were consecrated by superstitious rites, and devoted to the worship of saints, of angels, of relics, and of inanimate beings. Worship was not allowed to be offered, except in edifices consecrated to that use, nor were edifices allowed to be consecrated except by the celebration of the mass.

9. They blasphemed those who dwell in heaven, by representing the spirits of the just, and the angelic orders as arrogating the rights of God, and seeking and receiving from men the homage due only to Him. In legalizing the worship of those beings, they proceeded on the assumption that they acquiesced in it as suited to their nature and station, and accused them, therefore, of usurping the throne and prerogatives of God, and demanding a homage as deities. This was to ascribe to

them the greatest impiety of which creatures can be guilty.

10. They persecuted the true people of God, and inflicted on them the most wanton and atrocious cruelties. They formally undertook to execute the decrees of the councils and bishops against dissenters. In every age the ecclesiastics devolved on them the execution of their sentences to imprisonment, confiscation, exile and death. It was the civil powers that burned the martyrs in the south of France in 1017—that slaughtered the Albigenses and Waldenses in the twelfth and following centuries—that persecuted the Wickliffites and Lollards in England—that committed Huss and Jerome of Germany to the flames, and that put to death the vast crowd of martyrs in various European countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Thus it was given unto the beast to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, even among all kindreds, and tongues and nations.

11. Whoever attempted to deliver themselves by force from this religious tyranny were involved in a still deeper destruction. The Albigenses were almost exterminated by the armies against which they attempted to defend themselves. The small number which remained after the devastation of their fields and cities, were either forced to conform to the Catholic church, or driven into other lands. The Waldenses perished in far greater numbers by the sword, in their struggles for free-

dom, than by the fires of martyrdom; and sunk, after their contests, to a still more hopeless vassalage. A resort to the sword by the Bohemians and Huguenots of France to defend their religious freedom, resulted, after vast slaughters, in their entire subjection to the tyranny from which they sought deliverance. And the Protestants of Switzerland, Holland, Great Britain, and other nations, who succeeded in resisting their ancient tyrants, instead of securing religious liberty, only placed themselves under Protestant instead of Catholic masters. Thus he that killed with the sword was himself also killed by the sword.

12. The true witnesses of God exhibited their patience and faith, by meekly enduring the cruelties inflicted on them, and contenting themselves with the utterance of their testimony. Of the hundreds of thousands who were called through twelve centuries to maintain their allegiance to God at the peril of their lives, the number who faltered was comparatively small. And of those who, under the agonies of the scourge and the rack, recanted, or promised to recant, a large proportion, on being released from the sufferings that overcame them, abjured their recantation, reprofessed the religion of Christ, and met with firmness the hideous death to which they were immediately hurried. In many instances the young, the delicate, the beautiful, the cultivated, endured the most repulsive and shameful tortures, and wel-

comed the gibbet, the axe and the flames, with a sublimity of calmness, fortitude and trust in God worthy of the disciples of Jesus. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

13. The triumphant career of the wild beast as a blasphemer has continued through nearly twelve hundred and sixty years. Its agency as a religious tyrant did not commence at its emergence from the sea, but at its full assumption of authority over religion, its concurrence with the pope in enforcing his false doctrines and superstitions on its subjects, and in persecuting the witnesses of Jesus for their dissent. It is in that relation that it has acted as a blasphemer of God, his tabernacle and his saints. On that it did not enter until a long period after its emergence from the sea. From the best calculations, it seems probable that the period of the twelve hundred and sixty years is drawing to a close. It may extend to the latter part of the present century, but certainly not longer.

The commentators who regard the wild beast as symbolizing the Roman Empire, agree that the seven heads denote the seven forms of its ancient government: six of these are the kingly, the consular, the dictatorial, the decemviral, the tribunitial, and the imperial. It is not so clear what corresponds with the seventh. Constantine and his successors introduced a new principle into the government, by incorporating Christianity as the reli-

gion of the state. He made it an element of the constitution and a basis of power, and wrought thereby a revolution in the laws and administration of the empire. It was thus a political change, and fitly represented as one of the heads of the wild beast. This was, therefore, probably the seventh head, whose wound was healed.

As my space forbids the taking up of the next vision in this chapter, I will conclude with a few reflections.

1. The history of the church as portrayed in prophecy, and verified in the lives of its true adherents, teaches the great truth that holiness ever has met with opposition in the world. From the hour that the blood of Abel cried from the ground for vengeance till the present day, wicked men have hated good men, because the works of the one were evil, and of the others righteous. The ancient prophets, the inspired apostles, the primitive Christians were all more or less persecuted. Millions have sealed the truth of their testimony with their blood. They have died rejoicing in the privilege of following their Lord in his sufferings. No form of torture has been omitted—no influence, which hope or fear, or flattery or force, or ignominy or death could wield, has been neglected, in order to suppress divine truth.

2. But the gospel has still prospered. The very means used to retard its progress have tended to its diffusion. This fact is so generally admitted,

that it has given rise to a sort of proverb—"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." When human governments, on the contrary, took the gospel under their protection, it immediately began to languish. Both these facts proclaim the divine origin and the divine nature of Christianity. A religion must come from heaven that can neither be sustained by mere human effort, nor destroyed by human opposition.

3. Why is not the gospel more opposed by the world at the present day? Has it outlived its enemies, and entrenched itself in the affections of society? This is true only to a partial extent. The world is still hostile to pure religion. The carnal mind is yet enmity against God. Why then is there not more collision? It is because professors of the gospel exhibit so little of its genuine spirit—a spirit of self-denial, of deadness to sin, of crucifixion to the world. They make rare and feeble aggressive efforts on the kingdom of Satan. They are too much like the world to excite its hatred. The great mass of Christendom is sunk into an awful state of formalism and worldliness. But when the primitive holiness of the church shall be restored, and its members assume their legitimate character, opposition will surely be excited. Could you now bear such effects? If you could not retain both your Christian profession and your worldly popularity, your religious opinions and your earthly possessions, your rights of conscience

and your personal liberty, which would you renounce? Were it literally necessary to give up father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife and children, houses and lands, and even our own lives, in order to be disciples, who of us would still hold fast to our integrity? May God help us to examine ourselves by this test!

4. And if to professing Christians such close and rigid tests are to be applied, how clearly is it seen that the destruction of the openly wicked will be complete, inevitable and remediless! You are now "lost," "condemned already," and "the wrath of God abideth" on you! But while the execution of the sentence is suspended, mercy calls, Jesus invites and intercedes, the Spirit strives, the promises encourage, and heaven holds out its glittering crowns! Oh! will you not submit to the authority of God, and thus partake of the honors and joys of his eternal kingdom?

LECTURE NINTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XIII: 11-18; XIV: 1-5.

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by *the means of* those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number *is* Six hundred threescore and six.—*Rev. xiii: 11-18.*

The earth, when distinguished from the sea, denotes the population of an empire under a settled government, prior to any invasion. And when distinguished, as in the twelfth verse, from those who inhabit it, appears to represent its native population, in discrimination from its conquerors.

The ascent of this wild beast from the earth, therefore, signifies that it drew its origin from the native population of the empire—not from the foreigners who conquered it, and erected the ten kingdoms out of its ruins. It was not the creature of the Gothic nations. It sprung not from their faith, their manners, or their policy. But it was generated by the Latins, whom they subdued, and was the offspring of the corrupt faith, and the vile superstition of that people, imbibed before their subjection. It had two horns, the symbols of a two-fold authority, and like a lamb's, apparently for ornament and defence, not for aggression. But it spake as a dragon—an aggressive, carnivorous and merciless brute. It exercises all the power of the first wild beast—similar power as a civil ruler and tyrant of its vassals—similar power as an ambitious and lawless warrior—similar power as a usurper of dominion over the rights of God and the consciences of its subjects. And it exercises this power in the presence of (before) the ten-horned wild beast—i. e. simultaneously with it—by its allowance, and with its sanction. It excites the earth (the native Latin population), and those who inhabit it (the Gothic nations, who conquered them), to worship the wild beast, whose death wound was healed. The rulers of the empire—whom the people were excited to worship—were those who were represented by the head that received the death wound. Their principles and

practices were, therefore, eminently congenial to those of this two-horned wild beast. It works great wonders. It produces effects that seem to be miraculous, and by which it seeks to prove the co-operation and sanction of the Almighty, as the ancient prophets proved their divine commission by calling from heaven fire to consume their sacrifices. By these pretended miracles it deceives those who dwell on the earth—i. e. the conquering nations, into the belief that it is a prophet of the Lord, and through the influence thus attained, prompts them to make an image to the wild beast, which has the wound of the sword, and lived. As this wild beast symbolized a succession of civil rulers, its image (of the same form, but of a different nature from that which it represents) must denote a religious organization. To prompt the Gothic conquerors to make an image of the wild beast, under its seventh head, was to prompt them to erect an ecclesiastical government co-extensive with their territories, embracing a regular gradation of ranks, like the government of the empire under Constantine and his successors, founded on like principles, and animated by a similar spirit. Into the imperial hierarchy which was thus erected, it infused such power, such zeal, such ambition, and such a unity of purpose, that it acted as one gigantic individual, moved by its own inherent energies, and swayed by a single spirit. It claimed an absolute dominion over the religion of the sub-

jects, and caused those who would not submit to its assumptions to be put to death. And it caused all—the small and great, the rich and poor, the bond and free—to impress on themselves a mark, in token of their submission to its claims, and that no one could, without that mark, enjoy the right of property, or opportunity to gain a living. That mark is the name of the wild beast in that form, in which it subsisted under the head that received the death wound, or it is the number of that name. Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding compute the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and its number is six hundred and sixty-six. As the Greeks used their letters to represent numbers, the letters of every name might be taken as signs of arithmetical numbers as well as of sounds. To compute the number of a name, therefore, is to ascertain the sum total of the numbers which its letters represent. This number of the beast is the number of a man—i. e. of a family of men, a race, or a nation. It is the name of that family, therefore, from which the nation ruled by the wild beast under its seventh head drew its origin. It is also the name of the beast after whose pattern the new structure is formed. What, then, is the great combination of agents denoted by the two-horned wild beast. All its characteristics are found in the Roman Catholic hierarchy within the papal dominions, or in the papacy.

1. As the ten-horned wild beast rose up out of the sea, denoting the origin of an empire, from the troubled state of things in the world, so the present beast is seen rising up out of the earth, denoting a power that grew up insensibly, like a weed in a garden, out of the established and quiet order of things. Such was popery. It had its origin in the ancient Latin population, not in their barbarian conquerors. Rome, its metropolis, was in Latium, the native seat of the people that founded the Roman empire, and was the capital from which the church drew its name. It had subsisted as a nationalized hierarchy 163 years at the time of the conquest of Rome, and the full emergence of the wild beast from the sea.

2. It was subsequently invested with a civil dominion also over Latium, and some other countries, and thence became a two-fold monarchy, answering to its symbolization by two horns. The popes accordingly represent themselves as wielding both the temporal and the spiritual sword. Boniface VIII says in his bull, "For when the apostle said behold, here are two swords, the Lord did not reply they are too many, but enough." As a temporal prince, and as a universal bishop then, the Roman pontiff fills up the symbol of a two-horned wild beast.

3. Its horns were like a lamb's, indicating a harmless spirit, but it spoke with a dragon voice. This perfectly answers to that affectation of Chris-

tian meekness which was accompanied with the doctrine and deeds of the wicked one. At one time it can be the servant of servants—at another, the deposer of kings, and the disposer of empires. The standard of the papal kingdom is a lamb at the foot of a cross; but its history is that of a ferocious brute, spreading terror by its imperious voice, and preying on the blood of the unoffending and helpless. No other monarchy in Europe has been so jealous of its prerogatives, so quick and implacable in its resentments, and so devoid of pity towards its victims.

4. It exercised the same power as the first wild beast, and at the same period with it. It was a civil and military power, like the surrounding monarchies. It claimed, like them, absolute authority over the property, persons and lives of its subjects; issued and executed decrees, and levied taxes. Like them, it raised armies, made war on its neighbors, fought battles and conquered territories.

5. It prompted the earth—the native population—and those who inhabited it—the Gothic conquerors—to worship the first wild beast, whose death wound was healed—i. e. Constantine and his successors. The worship which the native and barbarian population was induced to offer to those emperors was involved in the ascription to them of the rights of God, and in admitting as just their arrogation of authority over his laws and his

church. If a man claim the peculiar prerogatives of God, those who assent to his claim are said to worship him. Constantine and his successors made that claim, and the popes, by influencing the people to yield to it, are said to have caused them to worship the beast. They even forged a decree for Constantine, in which he is represented as claiming absolute authority over all the churches of God, and then, by virtue of it, investing the popes with a dominion still more exalted over the faith and worship of the churches. In other words, the ten-horned beast, claiming divine rights, conferred them on the two-horned beast, who, in his turn, persuaded the people that the claim was lawful, and therefore that the gift was valid.

6. The popes and their subordinates have professed to enjoy miraculous powers through every age since their origin, and have thus sought to convince the rulers and the people of their divine commission. The miracles pretended to have been performed by them are too generally known to require detail. Ecclesiastical history is crowded with them. Nor is this claim yet abandoned. A Roman divine of some eminence published not long ago a vindication of the miracle of the "Holy House of Loretto"—the story that the house of Joseph and Mary flew through the air from Palestine to Italy! The public journals some years ago contained an account of the pretended healing of

an inveterate disease by the prayers of the pope. As recently as 1856, John Wyse, a Catholic priest of England, published a book, entitled the "Manual of the Confraternity of La Salette," in which he gravely narrates the Apparition of the Virgin Mary on the mountain of La Salette, Italy, September the 19th, 1846, to two illiterate peasant children of the ages of eleven and fifteen years! This book received the "approbation" of Dr. W. B. Ullathorne, Catholic bishop of Birmingham, who himself put forth a book in 1855, giving an account of his pilgrimage to La Salette in the previous year. Although this fraud has been amply exposed, yet the anniversary of this pseudo-miracle is celebrated by the visit of thousands to the spot. The instructions of the Virgin, said to have been given on the occasion, are carefully preserved and disseminated, and a new order of "saints" is likely to be established to give notoriety and force to the marvellous story. See *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1857. That the apostle John did not intend to sanction these pretensions is evident from his words: "And *deceiveth* them that dwell on the earth by means of those miracles, which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." Paul too mentions this as a characteristic of the man of sin, whose coming would be "with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." The very evidence, therefore, which popery adduces to prove its apostolic authority, demonstrates its identity with the man of sin.

7. The papacy influenced the Gothic rulers to make an image to the wild beast which received the death wound and lived, by the union of their several national churches into a single hierarchy, and subjection of them to the pope as their supreme legislative and judicial head. This was modeled after the ancient civil empire under Constantine and his successors, and hence called an image to the wild beast. For nearly two centuries after the conversion of the Gothic kings, the Roman Catholic bishops neither exerted nor claimed any jurisdiction over the churches out of their own limits. They were acknowledged as successors of Peter, respected as of high authority in doctrine and discipline, and consulted by princes and prelates on questions of importance. But their decisions were advisory—not legislative and judicial—and became obligatory on the church only by the ratification of princes and councils. The pastors of churches were till the eighth century elected by their congregations, or appointed by the bishops of the diocese in which they were installed. The bishops were elected by their clergy with the consent of the princes to whom they owed allegiance, and the metropolitans by their bishops. All questions between the bishops were settled by national councils; or if appeals were made to Rome, they were voluntary and from motives of expediency, not of necessity. Soon, however, after the erection of the papacy into a civil kingdom, the popes began

openly to aspire to a dominion over the churches of the other kingdoms. They claimed for their decrees universal authority, and endeavored to establish that claim by forging letters for the earlier popes as contending for similar power. They anathematized all who disputed their pretensions, and thus brought the fear of eternal death to bear upon the question. Finally, this arrogant claim of the pontiffs was admitted by the church at large, and they were esteemed the supreme legislative and judicial head of the great spiritual organization formed by uniting the local establishments. This vast hierarchy was in all its great features a counterpart to the imperial rule under the Christian emperors, and is appropriately called an image of the wild beast that received the death wound and lived.

8. This image was erected by the inhabitants of the earth—the princes, ecclesiastics and people of the kingdoms exterior to the papal territory—not by the pontiffs themselves. They had no power by their mere will to alter the constitution of those hierarchies. It was not till they had become invested with the prerogatives of a spiritual despotism that they could exert that power. They derived it from the official acts of the princes and prelates, and from the consent of the people. Although the scheme originated with the pontiffs, and was pursued and accomplished by their arts, still it was ostensibly effected by rulers, clergy and people.

Thus the two-horned wild beast said, "to them that dwell on earth, that *they* should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live."

9. The popes, thus exalted to supreme power over the church of the ten kingdoms, caused that as many as would not worship the hierarchy of which they were the head, should be put to death. Dissent from the faith and worship of the Catholic church, and a denial of the right of the pontiff to legislate over the laws of God, were made capital offences, and all who were convicted of them were delivered over to the civil magistrate and punished with death. Thus the secular beast is said to make war with the saints and to kill them, while the ecclesiastical is only said to cause them to be killed. The council of Lateran decreed not to put heretics to death, but to deliver them over to the civil power to be killed.

10. The ancients used the letters of the alphabet to designate certain numbers. Hence they frequently referred to their deities by announcing, not their names, but the number which the letters of their names would yield by addition. Thus Thouth, the Egyptian Mercury, was designated by the number 1,218; Jupiter by 737; the Sun by 608. The worshipers of these idols used to inscribe on their persons conspicuously the names of their deities, or the numbers which the letters of their names made. In like manner John tells us

that the image caused all classes to impress the name of the wild beast, or the number of its name, on their right hand, or on their forehead. To mark themselves with that name, as with an inscription or brand was, therefore, formally and notoriously to assume it, to show by open acts that they were the worshipers of that hierarchy formed after the model of the wild beast, and bearing his name. Such acts were a union with the Catholic church—adoption and profession of its faith, reception of its sacraments and obedience to its laws—acts by which men gave as public and ample proof that they worshiped the image, as if they had testified it by branding its name on their foreheads or hands. But what was the name? It was manifestly *κατεως*—the letters of which in their numerical value make exactly six hundred and sixty-six, as you may see by turning to a Greek Grammar.

Thus:—	Α = 30	} Modern authors on prophecy claim no credit for this wisdom. It appears in the writings of Irenæus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John. He says—"The name 'Lateinos' contains the number six hundred and sixty-six, and 666 } it is very likely, because the last kingdom is so called, for they are the Latins that now reign." Bishop Newton says that Lat-
	Α = 1	
	Τ = 300	
	Ε = 5	
	Ι = 10	
	Ν = 50	
	Ο = 70	
	Σ = 200	
	—	
	666	

einos (with ei) is the true orthography of the word, as the Greeks thus wrote the long i of the Latins. Certainly no name could be more descriptive of the papal hierarchy than that of Latin. Whatever nation of Europe was converted to the church of Rome, received with that faith the Latin language. All the official proceedings of the church have ever been, and still are in Latin. Children are christened in Latin; youth confirmed in Latin; young men and maidens are married in Latin; their prayers and praises are Latin; the office for the visitation of the sick is in Latin; and the dead are buried in Latin. It is called the Latin church.

11. And finally the two-horned wild beast caused that no one should be able to buy or sell, except such as had the mark, the name of the wild beast, or the number of its name. All social intercourse with heretics was forbidden. Thus the council of Tours 1163 enjoined that no one "should venture to yield them a retreat on his lands, give them succor, or have any communion with them by purchase or sale, so that, having lost all human aid, they may be compelled to return from the error of their way. Let whoever shall dare to contravene this command, be struck with an anathema, as a partaker of their iniquity." In like manner the third Lateran council sentenced "them and their defenders and harborers to an anathema, and forbade that any should

presume to keep them in their houses, or on their lands, sustain them or transact any business with them." Such is the exact correspondence between the representations of the prophecy and the great recorded and universal agency of the popes, symbolized by the two-horned wild beast.

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred *and* forty *and* four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, *being* the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.—*Rev.* xiv: 1-5.

What a contrast between this vision and the preceding! There we saw ferocious beasts, oppressing the people of God. Here we behold a Lamb on Mount Zion, standing amid the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who bear on their foreheads, not the name of the wild beast, but his own name, and the name of his Father. John was situated on the earth, but the scene of the vision was the heavenly tabernacle. This multitude stood on the sea of glass, and the song which he heard—as the voice of many waters and of loud thunderings—as of harpers harping on their harps, was their song, not the song of the

other redeemed or of angels. It was a new song, uttered on a new and peculiar occasion, and for new and peculiar gifts. And no one could learn that song but the one hundred and forty-four thousand. The peculiarity of the occasion is the near approach of Christ's reign on earth, as shown by the resurrection of a part of his people, and their exaltation to the stations in his presence, which they are thenceforth to fill. These are doubtless the same as the one hundred and forty-four thousand sealed of the seventh chapter, and are probably the witnesses of the eleventh chapter, who were slain, and after three-and-half years, raised from death, and taken up to heaven. In the second vision of the seventh chapter a great multitude of all nations was exhibited, as standing before the throne and before the Lamb, with white robes and palms. That vision comprises the whole of the redeemed, the present represents the sealed, as first crowned with that salvation, and presented as the first fruits to God and the Lamb.

1. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

2. They were not defiled with idolatry or false worship, but were espoused, as chaste virgins, to Christ.

3. They were without guile—without fault.

LECTURE TENTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XIV : 6-XV : 4.

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.—*Rev. xiv : 6-7.*

The gospel is everlasting. It is the same now that was preached by Christ and his apostles, and it is to remain unchanged, and to be preached to successive generations through countless years. It relates to the everlasting government of God, and reveals the principles on which it is to be forever conducted. The angel who has it is the representative of a body and succession of men. His flight in mid-heaven denotes the conspicuity of their mission. Those who dwell on the earth are the inhabitants of the ten kingdoms, while every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people, are the other nations of the world. His first summons is to fear God and to give him glory. To fear him is to regard him with the supreme awe that is due to his infinite greatness and exalted station. To give

him glory is to manifest that awe by a public acknowledgment of his being, perfections and works, and by recognizing his rights and submitting to his will. The reason offered for that summons is, that the hour of his judgment is come—the period in which he is to reclaim the rights which men have usurped—vindicate the prerogatives they have denied, and punish both those who arrogate his throne, and those who pay them homage.

His next injunction is to worship Him who made the heaven, and the earth, and sea, and fountains of waters. The heaven, earth and sea, when thus distinguished from each other, denote the world of men, in their relations as rulers and subjects. The sun is the symbol of the rulers of a nation—the earth, of a people under a settled form of government—the sea, of a multitude agitated with war or revolution, and the fountains, of remoter tribes and communities intimately related to a great central people. The command implies, therefore, that the nations of the earth are worshipping their rulers—or making their settled customs the law of conscience, or giving that honor to the usages of other communities, or yielding it to the passions of an excited multitude. And it is a summons to withdraw their homage from creatures and confer it only on the Creator. This symbol, then, represents a body and succession of men, who are to bear the everlasting gospel both to the nations of the ten kingdoms and to all other tribes and lan-

guages of the earth, and to summon them to fear God and glorify him by a just confession and homage, to warn them that the hour of his judgment is come in which he is to punish them who usurp his throne and arrogate his rights, and to enjoin them to worship, not rulers or their subjects, but Him only, their Creator. This office has, doubtless, already been fulfilled in part by those who for the last seventy years have been giving the word of God, translated into their several languages, to the nations of the earth, and have been publishing its glad tidings of salvation. The warning that the hour of the judgment of usurping rulers and apostate priests is come, is yet but very partially uttered. So is the summons to worship the Creator, not creatures, whatever may be their stations, their pretensions or their number. The great obstacles which the heralds of the gospel have everywhere to encounter, are notoriously those which this summons implies—the authority of anti-christian rulers—apostate priests—established constitutions—hereditary opinions, prejudices and passions. And the first step towards the conversion of the nations to God is their deliverance from an abject vassalage to man. Such is eminently the condition, not only of the millions of India, Hindostan, Burmah and China, of all Mahometan and Catholic nations, of the Greek, the Arminian, and the Syrian communions, but also of the Protestant established churches.

And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.—*Rev. xiv: 8.*

Great Babylon is the aggregate of the nationalized hierarchies of the ten kingdoms, whatever be their names. She symbolizes the teachers and rulers of the churches with whom the kings of the earth join in the institution, practice and dissemination of a false religion. Her difference, accordingly, from the image of the wild beast, is, that she embraces the Protestant hierarchies of the ten kingdoms, as well as the papal, which constitute that image. Babylon, then, is the vast structure of nationalized ecclesiastical rulers of every name, who usurp the rights of God, hold a faith essentially false, offer an unauthorized worship, and act with the anti-christian civil powers in their usurpations and persecutions. The fall of the city is accordingly her dejection from that station as a legal establishment, as the creature and organ of the civil governments, deriving her revenues from their treasuries, and supporting her usurped dominion by their power. This is apparent from her continued existence after her fall, and by the summons of the people of God by the angel in the eighteenth chapter, to come out of her, after having announced that she had fallen. As she is to subsist after her fall, that fall cannot be her dissolution as a community, but only her severance from the civil governments, and her dejection from her sta-

tion and power as a combination of national establishments. The angel here simply announces her fall. He will hereafter add the reasons for it and the character of her subsequent vassals.

This symbol, then, foreshows that the usurping hierarchies denoted by great Babylon are to be thrown down from their stations as national institutions. As the angel announcing this fact follows the angel bearing the everlasting gospel, her fall is to take place after those represented by the latter have fulfilled their work. This angel, like that, is the representative of a body of men—his flight in mid-heaven denotes their publicity and conspicuity, and his annunciation that there is to be a public and exulting celebration of her overthrow.

And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.—*Rev. xiv: 9-13.*

As this angel follows the others, the agents whom he represents are to be of a later period than

those whom they symbolize. His warning implies that although great Babylon has fallen from her station, yet men are still worshiping the wild beast and its image, and receiving its mark—that these, though no longer in the same relations to each other, still continue their usurpation of the rights of God and dominion over the church. Those Romish hierarchies, therefore, are still to subsist after their fall, and to acknowledge the pope as their head. The fearful punishment threatened to those who continue to worship those anti-christian powers, implies that their assumptions are a virtual usurpation of the throne of God, and that whoever submits to their claims, exalts them to the station of the Almighty, and must necessarily be treated as an incorrigible apostate. The principles on which that worship proceeds are then to be so fully discussed and developed, that all shall be able to discern and appreciate their relations to the rights of God and the obligations of creatures. That “here is the patience of the saints,” denotes that those usurping powers will carry their efforts to domineer over believers, to the extreme of a bloody persecution. To die in the Lord is to die for his sake as a witness to his truth. That their works are to follow them, implies that they are soon to be raised from death, and as kings and priests in Christ’s kingdom on earth, to resume their works towards the nations in converting them to the homage of God. This persecution is obviously to

be of a later period than that in which the witnesses are to be slain—as this is to follow the fall of great Babylon, and that is to precede it. This symbol, then, foreshows that after the overthrow of Babylon, numerous teachers are to arise who shall denounce avenging judgments on all who shall continue to yield submission to her arrogant claims, that the wild beast will still endeavor to compel them to apostatize, and will put them to death, but that they will sustain the conflict with a patience and fidelity worthy of prophets, and will receive for their reward a speedy resurrection to the station of kings and priests—will share in the momentous agencies on which the glorified saints are to enter at the establishment of Christ's kingdom on the earth. The great principles on which the pure and the apostate churches proceed, are thus immediately before the advent of the Redeemer, to be brought into the most open and violent antagonism, the worshipers of God are to give the most public demonstration of their allegiance by resigning their lives rather than apostatize, and the anti-christian powers and their vassals are to give the most resistless proof of their deliberate apostacy, by continuing rebellious, amid the threatenings of avenging judgments. They will thus show the propriety of the discrimination the Son of God is about to make between them, in raising his slaughtered people from death, in exalting them to the rewards of his kingdom, and in con-

demning the apostates and consigning them to everlasting punishments.

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud *one* sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.—*Rev. xiv: 14-16.*

He who sat on the cloud is a symbol of a class and multitude. He is like the Son of man. He represents human beings, therefore, and human beings doubtless raised from the dead in glory, like the human form of Christ in his exaltation. The golden crown on his head denotes that those whom he symbolizes had already been presented to the Father—had been adopted as sons and joint-heirs with Christ, and assigned to stations as kings and priests in his kingdom. The period of this agency is after the revivication of the witnesses, therefore, and doubtless also, from the vast numbers requisite to such an office, after the visible advent of Christ, and resurrection of the holy dead of all ages. They who are harvested by him are also human beings on the earth—living, therefore, and mortal, and are doubtless the saints. In their symbolization by lifeless objects, they are exhibited as passive subjects of the events foreshown, not its efficient agents. As crops are gathered in order to be preserved and appropriated to the uses

for which they are raised, so the reaping of the subjects of this harvest denotes their being collected for preservation and appropriation to the ends for which they are sanctified. That an angel came forth from the temple and apprised the reaper when to thrust in his sickle, denotes that a messenger from heaven is to announce to those whom the reaper symbolizes, the moment when they are to enter on their work. This is in exact accordance with the teaching of Christ—that with the voice of a great trumpet he will send his messengers to gather together his elect. *This beautiful symbol thus foreshows, that ere the final destruction of the vassals of anti-Christ, the living saints are to be gathered together for preservation, and probably for the judgment and acceptance prefigured in the parable of the sheep and the goats; that that event is to take place after the witnesses and the holy dead generally have been raised, accepted and crowned; that special messengers are to gather together the elect—that they are previously to descend to the clouds, await the approach of the appointed moment, and receive a signal from heaven when to enter on their work.

And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath

of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.—*Rev. xiv: 17-20.*

The scene presented to the apostle in this vision, and probably in the last, was the city by which the apostate hierarchies are represented, surrounded by the symbolic earth, covered with harvest fields and vineyards. The harvest had been reaped and gathered into storehouses; the grapes had become ripe and ready for the vintage. The angel's coming with the sickle from the temple in heaven, and his descent to the earth, signify that those whom he represents are to go from the divine presence, and are therefore angels. The fire of the altar, by which the sacrificial victims were consumed, is a symbol of the instruments of avenging justice. The command by the angel having power over the fire, to gather the vine of the earth, implies, therefore, that those whom the clusters represent, are to be gathered for vengeance, and thence are the worshippers of the wild beast and its image. That the grapes of the earth and the harvest were ripe, denotes that the principles of the two classes which they represent are fully developed and defined—their character settled and made conspicuous as worshippers of God or apostates, so that it is manifest that his dispensations towards them are in conformity with their disposition and conduct. The casting of the vine into the great wine-press of the wrath of God, sig-

nifies that those whom the vine symbolizes are to be crushed by the vengeance of the Almighty. The treading of the wine-press outside of the city—the symbol of the nationalized hierarchies—denotes that the grapes are from their vineyards, and represent those, therefore, who have been subject to their control, and devoted to their use. The river of blood flowing from the press, indicates the visibility and vastness of the destruction. This symbol, then, foreshows that angels are to descend from the divine presence, and gather together the incorrigible enemies of God, who have been devoted to apostate religions, in order to their destruction. It is a different gathering, therefore, from that at Armageddon, where the wild beast and false prophet are to be taken, as that is to be prompted by the unclean spirits—this by angels, that is to be voluntary—this by compulsion. It is the gathering, therefore, probably foreshown in the parable of the goats, in which those who have evinced the want of a proper temper towards Christ, by refusing to aid his brethren, when persecuted by the wild beast and false prophet, are to be judged and destroyed. It is to embrace those only, as the parable implies, who have acted in that relation, dwelt within the territory of the great city, owned her jurisdiction, furnished her with resources, and supported her in her tyrannies. The dejection of the vine into the press is a different work from the treading. The former is the

act of the reapers—the latter is to be the work of the Son of God (xix: 15). The wild beast and false prophet are first to be taken alive and cast into the lake of fire. Their armies—the whole organized array of their supporters—are next to be slain. Then as a shepherd, Christ is to gather and judge the nations who have acted in immediate relation to him as Messiah, and assign the true worshippers to everlasting life, and tread the apostates in the wine-press of his wrath.

And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous *are* thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways; thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou* only *art* holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.—*Rev.* xv: 1-4.

The whole of this spectacle was in heaven. The sea was a space in front of the throne, and exterior, therefore, to the elders. It resembled, from its translucent pavement, interspangled with gems, a smooth, watery expanse, refracting the red glow of sun-set, or the crimson tints of the sky. Its comparison to a sea indicates an extent far too great for the interior of the temple. It was doubtless a vast area extending from its front, and implies a corresponding greatness of the host stationed on

it. They are the victors from the conflict with the wild beast, and with its image, and with the number of its name—the vast crowd of witnesses who have held the testimony of Jesus and refused submission to those anti-Christian powers, through the long period of their triumph. They have neither sanctioned the civil rulers in usurping the prerogatives of God, nor obeyed the authority of the apostate hierarchies, nor, through fear of persecution, suppressed their dissent and yielded a nominal submission to their sway. This last is the victory over its name, doubtless in distinction from the victory over the wild beast and its image. Their chanting the wisdom and rectitude of the Almighty when about to judge those usurping powers, shows a vast intelligence of the reasons of that great measure of his administration, an acknowledgement of its necessity to his vindication, and an understanding of the salutary impressions it is to make on the universe. They have harps of God, given by him and devoted to his praise. They sing the song of Moses, as it is like his, a celebration of the greatness, wonderfulness and justice of the divine ways; and the song of the Lamb, as he is the Lord God Almighty, who has exercised the government of the universe during the triumph of the wild beast, and the King of the nations who is now to judge that usurper, take possession of the earth, and bring all its tribes to obedience. Their song—"Great and marvellous

are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true thy ways, thou King of saints"—is an adoring confession that it was in boundless wisdom that he had, through so many ages, allowed the triumph of the wild beast, and the oppression and slaughter of his witnesses, that spotless rectitude and truth had marked all his dispensations towards them in their conflict with that usurping power, and were now to mark the avenging judgments by which he was to destroy it. The question—"Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name, as alone holy?"—implies that the grounds on which he proceeds are to be so fully made known, and the greatness and wisdom of the results of his administration to be so conspicuous, that none can resist the demonstration of his benevolence and skill, that none can escape the conviction that He alone—the All-knowing, the All-wise, the All-good, the Almighty—is adequate to conduct the government of his empire; that all the objections of his enemies are groundless, and all the doubts, fears, and perplexities of his people without foundation. And the prophecy—"All nations shall come and worship before thee, for thy judgments are made manifest"—denotes that the terrific inflictions by which he is to destroy his antagonists, are to be seen by the nations to be a vindication of himself, and be the means of awakening them from unbelief to a conviction of his being, perfections, rights and dominion, and

of bringing them to yield him acknowledgment and homage.

How sublime the ascriptions of this song, from those who had endured the most cruel persecutions for his sake, and whom to human eyes he often seemed to have deserted to the malice of their enemies. There is not one of that long train of witnesses and martyrs that refuses to join in the song. What a sense it bespeaks of the rightfulness of his sovereignty ! What an acquaintance with the reasons of his procedure ! What a comprehension of the results that are to spring from the display that men will make of their hostility to him, and from the exhibition of his righteousness towards them ! What a knowledge and realization that his ways, which have seemed unsearchable, are at length to become invested, in the eyes of all his children, with dazling light and beauty, to contribute to the resistless energy of his government, to subserve the conversion of the nations, and to add forever to the grandeur and blessedness of his empire ! I conclude with a single reflection.

What a glorious being does this revelation discover Jesus Christ to be ! No longer a sacrifice for sin—no longer set at naught by his enemies, he stands forth in all the radiance of his glory, extolled by a countless multitude of shining, immortal ones, and crowned with ineffable beauty and splendor. Will you not worship such a Savior ? Is there any disgrace in serving such a

Master? No! no!! It will dignify your nature, associate you with all the good and great of the universe, and open up to you scenes of glory and blessedness through eternal ages.

LECTURE ELEVENTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XV : 5-XVI : 21.

And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened : And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power ; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.—*Rev. xv : 5-8.*

The temple of the tabernacle which was opened was the inner temple, in which was the throne of the Almighty. This is shown by the fact, that John saw the golden vials given to the angels by one of the four living creatures, whose station was in the inner temple. The pure white linen and the golden girdles of the angels denote their rectitude and dignity. The delivery to them of the vials by one of the living creatures, indicates that the august attendants in the presence of God, whom they represent, are informed of his avenging judgments. The temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power. This

denotes that the awful displays of his justice and sovereignty, which the destruction of his enemies is to form, are to strike the heavenly hosts with the profoundest sense of their infinite distance from him, with the inflexibleness of his rectitude, and the weakness of his enemies, thus filling them with awe and submission. It is also said that no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels should be fulfilled—i. e. no incense symbolic of prayers by the saints on earth, for the salvation of his foes, is to be offered during that period. His judgments are to be felt, therefore, by the church on earth, by the redeemed in heaven, and by the angelic hosts, to be necessary to his vindication, and to the great measures of grace that are to follow.

And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and *upon* them which worshipped his image.—*Rev. xvi: 1-2.*

With the beginning of the seven vials there is evidently a new prophetic series commenced. We go back to a period of time long prior to that referred to by the seventh trumpet and the recent visions. And we advance again, as in the seven seals and the seven trumpets, to the period of the advent of the Son of God, and of the establishment of his visible and universal reign on earth.

The office of the seven angels is merely to assist the revelation, by designating the commencement of the seven judgments, not to symbolize the agents on earth by whom they are caused. The direction by a voice from the temple to pour out their vials, indicates that the appointment by the Most High, of the great judgments thus prefigured, was to be publicly announced in heaven. The land or earth, as distinguished from the sea, rivers, fountains and air, denotes the population of an empire under a settled government. The men on whom this vial fell were those who have the mark of the wild beast. They live under the governments that are symbolized by that monster, and are, therefore, inhabitants of the ten kingdoms. They worship its image also, and either live therefore under the dominion of the Catholic hierarchies, or acknowledge their authority and offer their worship. The shower from the vial excited on those on whom it fell a malignant and infectious ulcer, irritating to them and dangerous to those who came within their influence. This ulcer is symbolic, and represents an analogous disease of the mind—a restlessness and rancor of passion, exasperated by noxious opinions, that fill it with a sense of obstruction and misery, like the torture of an ulcerated body. This vial is referred generally to the first step in the French revolution. And no symbol can be more suited to portray the restlessness under injury—the ardor of resentment, hate

and revenge, and the contagion of false principles, that marked the beginning of the disquiets of the European states, towards the close of the last century. The middle and lower classes in France were suddenly seized with an insupportable sense of their oppression by the monarchy—of their degradation by the nobles—of the deception and tyranny practised on them by the church, and of their being deprived of the improvement and happiness, in every form, to which they were entitled. This feeling was roused to a ten-fold energy, by the opinion, that the power of the monarch, the nobility and the ecclesiastics was a sheer usurpation and, therefore, an atrocious crime, demanding instant resistance and condign punishment. With this denial of the title of the king and nobles, were mingled new and false theories of liberty, property, government, religion, and national glory. The whole kingdom thus became restless and inflamed. It resembled men whom some noxious element has touched and covered with a burning eruption. But the exasperating vial fell not alone on France. The angel, scattering a shower on Belgium, Holland, and the valley of the Rhine, crossed the Alps, drenched the vales of Italy, swept around over the German Empire and British Isles, and finally dashed the dregs of vengeance on the peninsula of Portugal and Spain, and the distant southern shores of America. The whole ten kingdoms thus became the scene of a similar dis-

content with the established governments, and of wild and desperate projects of revolution. These events began about the year 1786.

And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.—*Rev. xvi: 3.*

The sea denotes the population of a central kingdom in violent commotion. Wherever the drops, showered from the vase, fell on the waters, they became gore, as though one had bled there to death. The expanse became spotted with blood, like a vast battle-field, over which thousands recently slaughtered are strewn. And all the living creatures to which the waters had been a source of sustenance, were destroyed by them. The blood-spots on the waves and the death of the fish, denote both that the blood of those whom the waters represent was to be shed, and that they were to shed the blood of others, sustaining a relation to them like that of fish to the waters which they inhabit. This is implied in the color of the waves before the death of the creatures, and then in their causing the death of those creatures. The sea is to the animals that live in it what a people is to the monarch, nobles, and ecclesiastical dignitaries, who owe to them their station and support. The bloodiness of the water, therefore, by which all creatures inhabiting it died, indicates that those slaughterers of one another, whom the waves re-

present, are also to destroy all orders of their superiors.

This symbol denotes the second great act in the tragedy of the French revolution, in which the people slaughtered one another in feuds, insurrections and civil wars. They also exterminated the king and queen, nobles and prelates, civil magistrates and priests, military commanders and soldiers, persons of illustrious descent, of distinguished reputation, talents and wealth. The slaughter commenced in the attack on the Bastile, July 14, 1789. Similar violences were soon after perpetrated in every part of the kingdom. The people of the rural districts rose generally in rebellion, and slaughtered the nobles, their families and supporters. In Paris a revolutionary tribunal was established, and the extermination of prominent citizens was commenced on a vast scale. The whole nation was drenched in blood.

And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.—*Rev. xvi: 4-7.*

Rivers and fountains are to a sea what smaller exterior communities are to a great central people. As the French nation was the sea, the rivers and fountains are the remote inhabitants of the other

apocalyptic kingdoms. The blood with which the rivers and fountains ran, wherever the shower of the vial fell, denotes that their blood whom the waters symbolize was to be shed, and that they also were to shed the blood of others. This is shown by the statement that blood was to be their drink—a means by which they should gratify their passions, be nourished, and continue to subsist. The exclamation of the angel who poured out the vial, and the response of the angel at the altar, show that the fountains and rivers symbolize nations—that those who were to suffer and inflict the slaughters indicated by the blood, had persecuted the saints and witnesses of God, and shed their blood; and that the destruction to which they were doomed was to be in retribution of their crimes, and was to be celebrated as “true and righteous” by the heavenly hosts.

This symbol denotes the vast bloodshed in the other apocalyptic kingdoms by the wars that sprang out of the French revolution. The contest was begun by the French with Austria in 1792. It soon extended to Holland, Sardinia, Russia, Italy, Spain, England, Prussia, Switzerland, Denmark, and Portugal. It continued for more than twenty years. The blood of millions of the French was poured out on the soil of other kingdoms; millions of other nations were slain in resisting their aggressions; vast multitudes unarmed of both sexes were put to death. All those nations

had been persecutors of the saints and prophets, and blood was given them to drink. War became their trade, and the means by which they maintained their national existence.

And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.—*Rev. xvi: 8-9.*

Those who govern á kingdom are to their subjects what the sun is to the land and sea. Their office is to protect, to instruct and to comfort, as the office of the sun is to yield that measure of light and heat which is most favorable to animal and vegetable life. But when they acquire unlimited power and employ it in oppressing their people, they become to the victims of their tyranny what the sun would be to men, were its rays increased to a scorching heat. The symbol denotes, therefore, that the rulers of the people, on whom the former vials were poured, were to be armed with destructive powers, and employ them in the most violent oppression, and that the victims of their cruelty would blaspheme the name of God, who appoints those sufferings in punishment of their crimes against him, and not change to give him glory. A counterpart to this symbol is seen in the despotic power of the revolutionary rulers of France, and the oppressions with which they scorched that people for more than twenty

years. Not to specify, I will merely say that every kind of misery with which the wicked are ever scourged by an avenging Providence, was inflicted on the nation in an extreme degree. Every country which they invaded was devastated by similar outrages. Yet instead of being reclaimed from idolatry and atheism, they continued to deny the existence of God, to disown all responsibility to him, or to claim his sanction of their crimes. They repented not to give him glory, but continue even to the present day a nation of infidels and apostates.

And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.—*Rev. xvi: 10-11.*

The ascription of a throne and a kingdom to the wild beast proves that he is the symbol of the rulers of an empire. The effect of the vial on the throne is not depicted, but only its consequence to the kingdom. The darkness prefigures the humiliation of its power, the obscuration of its glory, and the extinction of its hopes. The action of the survivors is such as might naturally spring from the disappointment, the chagrin and the despair excited by such a catastrophe. They gnawed their tongues for pain, and continued to blaspheme God by refusing to acknowledge his hand in their overthrow.

The French nation is still alluded to, and the

event indicated by the symbol is probably the subversion of the imperial throne, and the re-establishment of the Bourbon dynasty in 1814 and 1815. Or it may be the total subversion of monarchy and the expulsion of the royal family by the revolution of 1848. The kingdom was felt to be shrouded in darkness, its power forever broken, its glory eclipsed, its prospects of greatness extinguished. The nobility, the officers of government, and the higher classes were devoured with chagrin, and with atheistic impiety blasphemed God, by disavowing his dominion, justifying their crimes, and denying their merit of such retribution. They changed from none of their works.

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.—*Rev.* xvi: 12.

It was by a diversion of the Euphrates from its channel, that a way was prepared for the leaders of the Medes and Persians, who were from the East, to enter the walls of Babylon, and thus to subvert the empire. The river is here used as a symbol in an analogous relation. It is by the diversion or exhaustion of something having a likeness of Euphrates in its relation to Babylon, that the way is to be prepared for the assault and overthrow of some resembling kingdom. But great Babylon, the city of which the literal Babylon is the symbol, is the body of rulers and teachers of the churches of the

ten kingdoms, erected into hierarchies, and nationalized by their governments. Her fall is to be a dejection from her station as civilly established. The evaporation of her river is doubtless, therefore, to be the alienation and withdrawment from her of her supporters, by the dissipation of their faith in her pretensions, of their awe of her authority and of their approbation of her rule, by which they have been kept in subjection. The kings from the East are those who, after having produced that alienation of her supporters, are to assail and precipitate her from her station. This symbol indicates, then, that agencies are to be exerted by which vast crowds of the supporters of national establishments are to be withdrawn from them. The reasons for their support by the civil government, whether they lie in the faith of the people, or the policy of the rulers, are to be removed, and the general mind prepared for their discontinuance as establishments. This vial has already begun to be poured ; the agents who are to exhaust the great Euphrates of the apostate Babylon have commenced their office. The withdrawal of a large body of ministers from the Scottish national church ; the secession from the Catholic churches of Germany, and the resignation of their office by a portion of the ministers in Switzerland, are events that accord with the symbolization. They are the beginning of movements, perhaps, that are at length to reduce to a shallow

stream the mighty current that has hitherto run beneath the walls of the great city. The Euphrates thus will be dried up, that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared.

And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.—*Rev. xvi: 13-16.*

Unclean spirits are demons which enter into human beings and excite them to lawless appetites and works. But these spirits were clothed with forms, as appears from their being compared to frogs—hideous, grovelling, noisy and amphibious. The dragon is also a bodied shape, and is the symbol of the rulers of the eastern Roman empire, supporting an apostate church. The wild beast represents the civil rulers of the kingdoms of the western Roman empire, and the false prophet, the ecclesiastic and civil hierarchy of the papal states. These unclean spirits work wonders, as the false prophet professes to work miracles. They are to be ecclesiastics, therefore, and to claim a divine sanction to their mission. They go to the kings of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. That great day is the day when the Son of God shall visibly des-

cead, and cast the wild beast and false prophet into the lake of fire, and destroy the kings and their armies. As the kings of the earth are thus distinguished from the wild beast and dragon, and false prophet, who represent eastern and western, and papal Rome, they are the chiefs of other nations, in which there are worshipers of God. The gathering of the anti-christian powers to the battle of that day is to be their last effort to oppose the kingdom of the Redeemer. As the spirits symbolize ecclesiastics, and go from the mouth of the three great anti-christian powers, they denote men who are to be prompted by the principles of those usurping and apostate combinations. They are to be sent forth by them, and are to go to excite in the rulers of the other nations the same hostility to the kingdom of Christ as reigns in the breast of the dragon, wild beast and false prophet. They are to induce the kings of the whole earth to unite in a war to prevent the establishment of Christ's kingdom, and to assemble them at a place called Armageddon, which denotes the place of their destruction. As they would hardly contend directly with the Almighty Avenger at his advent, and as the true worshipers would scarcely defend themselves by violence, the aim probably of the kings is to be to refute the faith of believers in an indirect manner. As this conspiracy is immediately to precede the advent of Christ, it is to follow the drying of Euphrates, the slaughter and

resurrection of the witnesses, and the fall of great Babylon. It is doubtless to be at the period of that last persecution of the saints, which is to follow the final threatenings of vengeance on the worshippers of the wild beast and its image (xiv: 9-14). Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, that he may not walk naked, and they may see his shame. This means that the people of God will be expecting his advent, but that the world at large will be taken by surprise, and that all who are not watching and ready for the dread event, will be exposed by his appearing to public disgrace.

And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, *and* so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, *every stone* about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.—*Rev. xvi: 17-21.*

The other vials were poured on different parts of the symbolic world—this, into the air which envelops the globe—i. e. the great changes which follow it are not to be limited to the Roman empire, but to extend to all the kingdoms of the world. Lightnings, voices and thunders are symbols of the vehement thoughts and passionate ex-

pressions of multitudes, occasioned by the sudden discovery of momentous truth. An earthquake denotes a civil revolution, in which the whole surface of society is thrown into disorder, and ancient political institutions shaken down. This convulsion, the like to which had not been since men were on earth, is the same as that of the sixth seal, and is to extend to all the governments of the earth. Great Babylon, which had previously fallen, is then to separate into three parts, not geographically, but in respect to leaders, principles, or policy. The cities of the nations, as distinguished from the great city, are the hierarchies of the nations, without the ten kingdoms, as the Russian, the Greek, the Armenian, the Syrian. These are also then to fall. God is then to pour on Babylon that storm of wrath by which she is to be utterly destroyed. Every island—i. e. smaller combination of men—is to be dissolved, and every mountain—i. e. mighty government—is to vanish away. A hail-storm is a symbol of sudden and resistless strokes, by which men are smitten down from happiness to misery. Such a tempest is to beat on the men who belong to the train of anti-Christ, and they are to blaspheme God, because of the greatness of their calamities. The revolutions and contests indicated by these symbols, are doubtless to follow the advent of Christ to raise the dead saints: they are to precede the vintage and the harvest, and to occupy a considerable period.

LECTURE TWELFTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XVII: 1-XIX: 10.

And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.—*Rev. xvii: 1-6.*

Having gone through the seven vials, the apostle, or the Holy Spirit through him, pauses in his narrative, for the purpose of illustrating what had preceded. If there be repetition, it is designed to make the entire subject more intelligible and impressive. The opprobrious name given to the woman determines its application to a corrupt and false church, as opposed to the "Bride, the

Lamb's wife." This epithet could not be given to pagan or Mahometan religions, as they have not been false to faith previously pledged. It belongs exclusively to a church that has fallen away, that has apostatized from her spiritual head, and has been playing the harlot spiritually with the kings of the earth. She is said to sit upon many waters. In verse fifteenth these waters are explained as representing many nations—i. e. the nations of the Roman empire after the emergence of the ten kingdoms. "The kings of the earth that have committed fornication with her" are all those governments which have been within the pale of her communion, and whose subjects have imbibed her doctrines, worship and practices, until they have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. Being wrapt in the spirit of inspiration, John is conducted into the wilderness, where the scene of his vision is laid. He saw a woman sitting on a beast—a significant emblem of a church supported by an empire. The beast is covered with names of blasphemy, symbolizing its arrogation of the rights of God, and its assumption of authority over his legislation. It also has seven heads and ten horns. This is manifestly the same beast as the one described in the thirteenth chapter, and here as there, the seven heads imply the seven forms of government that successively prevailed in the Roman empire; and the ten horns refer to the ten kingdoms, into which that empire was finally

divided. The purple and scarlet of the woman—her gold and gems, denote her wealth, luxury and pomp. Her golden cup indicates her artful agency in seducing the nations to apostacy. The inscription on her forehead is significant of her character. “Mystery.” Her deeds are wrapt in darkness. The apostle Paul has denominated the whole system “the mystery of iniquity.” Another inscription is “Babylon the great”—i. e. the nationalized hierarchies of the papal kingdoms. What Babylon was to the old testament church, she is to the new, and such is to be her end. She is also styled “The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.” There are other national and corrupt churches besides that of Rome, but they have descended from her. She is, therefore, the mother, and they are the daughters. Every church that is connected with the state is essentially papal in its spirit. She must receive members, knowing them to be unreconciled to God—must adopt a faith prescribed by the civil rulers—must persecute those who dissent from that faith. And these are the original elements of Romanism. “She was drunk with the blood of the saints”—words indicating the infuriate joy she derives from the slaughter of the witnesses of Jesus. John’s wonder at this, plainly evinces that Christian, and not pagan Rome was intended. It could be no matter of surprise to him, that a heathen city should persecute Christians. He himself had seen, and was even

then suffering persecution under Domitian; but that a city professedly Christian should riot in the blood of the saints, caused him "to wonder with great admiration."

And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.—*Rev. xvii: 7-8.*

It was not sufficient to represent these things in a vision. The angel now promises to explain the meaning of the woman and of the beast that carried her. The wild beast on which she is borne was, and is not, and yet is. You remember that the wild beast has been regarded throughout our exposition, as a symbol of the civil rulers of the Roman empire. Its seven heads denote the seven orders of rulers in the ancient empire; and its ten horns denote the ten kingdoms into which it was finally divided. At the time indicated by the vision, the supreme authority had passed from the heads to the horns. While these seven heads ruled successively, the wild beast was, but as at the period referred to by the vision, the dominion was to pass over to the horns, the ten kingdoms were to be established, the government of a head was no longer to be exercised. This state of things is, therefore, described by the expression—

“the wild beast is not.” And yet these ten kingdoms exert a sway essentially the same, maintaining the laws of the ancient empire in a large degree, uniting to support the same religion as that which the rulers denoted by the seventh head supported, and like those rulers, usurping the prerogatives of God, and nationalizing the church. Hence it is said “the wild beast yet is.” It was once as the head of the ancient empire ; it is not, at the period referred to, because the government is no longer centered in one head, but divided into ten kingdoms ; and yet it is, because these kingdoms have one mind, and give their power and strength unto the beast. In this respect they are an eighth, formed of the seven, and appropriately symbolized by the same monster under the horns. The abyss (in our version improperly rendered the bottomless pit), out of which the wild beast was about to ascend, was the sea of many waters, by which the people, multitude and nations of the empire, after the fall of the imperial rule, were symbolized.

And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings ; five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come ; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet ; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.—*Rev. xvii : 9-13.*

This subject deserves the deepest attention—af-

fords a proper exercise of the understanding, and demands mature wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains. This is probably an allusion to the fact, that ancient Rome was built on seven hills. But it is explained by the angel as referring not to the geographical position of the city, but to the seven kinds of rulers who exercised the government of the ancient empire. There are seven kings—i. e. kingdoms or forms of government. "Five are fallen." Five of these forms—the kingly, the consular, the dictatorial, the decemviral, the tribunitial—had already passed away when John wrote. One then existed, which was the pagan imperial, and the other, which had not yet come, and was to continue a short time, was the Christian imperial. It commenced with Constantine, A. D. 312, and fell at the subversion of the Western empire in 476. The eleventh verse has been already explained, as including the whole of the ten kingdoms under an eighth head, because of similar character with the seven. These are destined, like the others, to destruction. The ten horns denoted the dynasties of the kings who had not arisen at the period of the vision, and who were not to exist until the emergence of the wild beast from the abyss of the waters, but were to receive power at that period, the same "hour," and to perpetuate the beast itself in an eighth form, by giving their power and authority to the wild beast.

These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.—*Rev. xvii: 14--18.*

The wild beast is in this eighth form to go into perdition, for the kings are to make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb is to conquer them, because he is King of kings and Lord of lords, and his soldiers are called, and chosen, and faithful. The question between them, therefore, is one of prerogatives and supremacy. He is to destroy them, because he is not subordinate to them, as they assume, in trying to exalt their authority above his, but has an absolute control over lords and kings, as well as subjects. They who are with him have paid the homage that accords with his rights—are the worshipers whom he calls and chooses, and who, by their fidelity, give proof of their meetness for his acceptance. The waters have already been explained to signify the population of the empire.

When this woman has nearly run her career, the kings are to hate her—to rob her of her wealth and ornaments—make her naked, devour her flesh and burn her with fire. God hath put into their

hearts to fulfill his will, and act the part ascribed to them, until his words are accomplished. The conversion of the kings to hatred of the great idolatress, is beginning already to take place in the disallowance of her claims in most of the European States, in the confiscation of her property, and the slaughter of many of her priests in France, in the conquest of the papal states, in the dethronement of the Pope by Napoleon, and his recent exile and humiliation, and in various exhibitions of ill-will in Spain, Portugal, Austria and Great Britain.

Finally, the woman seated on the wild beast is explained to be the city that reigneth over the kings of the earth—i. e. the great Babylon—the great combination of hierarchies, that is sustained by the power of the civil arm, and yet reigns over the consciences of kings and subjects.

And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for

she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city of Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth her merchandise any more: The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointment, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sor-

ceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.—*Rev. xviii: 1-24.*

The angel descending from heaven and proclaiming the fall of Babylon, is doubtless the representative of a body of men. The effulgence which he flashes over the earth, denotes the resistless light in which they are to unveil the apostate character of Babylon, and the dazzling splendor in which they are to set the rectitude and wisdom of God in her punishment. The vehemence with which he proclaims her fall, indicates that they are to regard it as an event of the greatest importance. Her fall is to be her dejection from her station as a national establishment. It is to be produced by violence, as a city is overthrown only by a violent cause, an earthquake e. g., and as the millstone was hurled by the angel with violence into the sea. That it is to be the work of the multitude instead of the rulers, is shown by the regrets of the kings and nobility at her destruction. As ancient Babylon, after her overthrow, became the habitation of wild beasts; her desolate houses were filled with doleful creatures; owls and satyrs, and dragons cried in her pleasant palaces: so this analogous Babylon is to become, after her fall, the resort of the most vile and detestable beings. Those who afterwards shall unite themselves to her, are to be as much more depraved and savage than her former adherents, as dragons,

owls and satyrs are more hideous and hateful than the ordinary population of a wealthy and powerful city. They are to throw off their disguises, and exhibit their enmity to God, in all its deformity. All these things show that her fall is to be a change most momentous to her, to the people of God, and to the world. Her overthrow, like that of ancient Babylon, is to be in consequence of her idolatry, because all nations have drunk of her wine, and the kings have united with her in the practice and propagation of idol-worship. This representation accords with the different agency which she has exerted towards them. She has seduced the multitude to her false-worship, by her arts. But the kings needed no such seduction. They have been as ready to usurp the rights of God, and to exalt their authority over his, as she.

After this proclamation of her fall, John heard another angel summoning the people of God to come out of her, lest they partake of her sins and receive of her plagues. This angel is likewise to be regarded as a symbol of a body of men. His warning shows, that after her fall some of the people of God are still to linger within her communion, and that after the public announcement of her fall, another class of men are to arise, and summon the true worshipers to withdraw from her, lest by continuing under her jurisdiction, they sanction her sins and expose themselves to her punishment. The city is thus distinguished from

its inhabitants, the one referring to the hierarchies of the church, the other to the members. What the walls and dwellings of a material city are to the people whom they protect, the hierarchy of a church is to the members under its authority. Her punishment is to be a wholly different event from her fall—is quickly to follow that catastrophe, and is to be inflicted by the hands of men. Give to her as she gave. Double to her double, according to her treatment of others. Into the cup into which she poured, pour to her double. These retributions are to overtake her suddenly. In a day her plagues shall come—death, and mourning and famine, and she shall be burned with fire. The kings of the earth who had united with her in her idolatry are to witness and lament her punishment. They will not be its authors, therefore, nor will they attempt to hinder it. They are to stand at a distance, and leave the executors of the divine wrath, who are to be the multitude, to fulfill their office without obstruction. As the kings are to survive her, her fall is to take place before the great battle, in which they are to be destroyed. Her merchants, who are the great ones of the earth, symbolize the nobles and dignitaries that held the patronage of her benefices. They also, and others who have grown rich by her luxury, are, like the kings, to witness her overthrow, without attempting to prevent it, and they alone are to lament it. Heaven—i. e. the angelic hosts and

the saints, the apostles and prophets—are summoned to rejoice over her, because God hath condemned her condemnation of them. And her destruction is to be entire. As a millstone when thrown into the depths of the sea, sinks forever from the sight of man, so she is to be swept from the earth, and leave not a trace of her greatness or mischievous dominion. The cause assigned for all this is, that she is a sorceress, whose sole agency has been to seduce men from God, and a murderess, who has shed the blood of the prophets and saints, and of all who had been slain on the earth. What a tremendous doom thus awaits those apostate hierarchies! What a demonstration it is to form, that God rejects them! What a refutation of their impious pretences, that they are his ministers; that they alone are authorized to teach his will, and that he sanctions their usurpations, blasphemies and persecutions! And what a noble vindication of the witnesses and martyrs, who resisted alike their seductions and their vengeance, and who maintained allegiance to the King of kings.

And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.—*Rev. xix: 1-4.*

The angelic hosts utter a shout of praise to God for the display of his truth and justice in the destruction of the apostate powers. The four and twenty elders and the four living creatures, in responding to this shout, symbolize an answering song from the redeemed. This song of exultation denotes that they are not only to be spectators of her overthrow, but to discern its uprightness and wisdom. They are fully to know her character and agency, the dispensations of God towards her, and the influences that are to spring from her punishment. What a vastness of knowledge does this imply! What a sense of the divine rights! What an acquaintance with the reasons why he allows men to rebel, and displays his justice in punishing them! What a realization of the guilt of rebellion, and what an assurance that that great measure of his administration is to subserve the well-being of his kingdom through eternal ages! This sublime hymn gives further proof that Babylon is not a material city, but the representative of apostate men. As a material city is not an agent, and not the subject of praise and blame, its destruction could not form such a display of God's righteousness, or of the vindication of those whose blood it had shed.

And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give

honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou do it* not : I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus : worship God ; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.—*Rev. xix : 5--10.*

A voice from the throne summons all the servants of God of every rank to praise him. This indicates that a great epoch is then to be reached in his government—a manifestation made of the result of his mysterious dispensations that shall vindicate their rectitude and wisdom. The halleluiah of the multitude that the Lord God Almighty *has reigned*, (*εβασίλευσε*) indicates that they are to see that the peculiar administration which he has exercised is most skilfully adapted to the great ends of his empire—is worthy of his infinite attributes, and that it has prepared the way for the reign of grace that is to follow through everlasting ages. The summons to rejoice and give him glory because the marriage of the Lamb has come and his bride has made herself ready, denotes that the period of the resurrection and adoption of the holy dead has arrived—that his previous administration has served to fit them for the new relations to which they are to be exalted, and that it is to be to them an epoch of peculiar joy and triumph. Her being arrayed in fine linen, bright and pure, signifies their

public justification—her marriage, their exaltation to stations as heirs and joint heirs forever in his kingdom. As a bride by her marriage is united to her husband through life, so the redeemed are by their marriage with the Lamb, to be raised to that relation to him which they are forever to sustain. They are never to descend to a lower station—never to ascend to a higher, but are to reign with him as kings and priests forever and ever. Their marriage is therefore to involve their resurrection from death, and exaltation to the thrones on which they are to serve him through their endless existence. They who are to be called to the supper of the marriage of the Lamb, are different persons from the raised and glorified saints who are denoted by the bride, and are doubtless the unglorified saints on earth. What a splendid nuptial ceremony that will be when all the risen saints, arrayed in fine linen, white and clean, shall be publicly recognized by the Lamb as his bride, and all the saints, then living on earth, shall be called to witness the glorious consummation! Nor are these mere fancy sketches. “These,” said the angel to the astonished prophet—“These are the true sayings of God.” The response of the angel to the apostle who fell down to worship him, is eminently beautiful. It indicates a befitting sense of the sanctity of God’s rights, and exalts the services of the witnesses of Jesus to an equality with his own. I am a servant of the same order as you

and your brethren, who hold the testimony of Jesus. You and they, in proclaiming that testimony before men, are to fulfil essentially the same office as I, guided by the revealing Spirit, have fulfilled in interpreting the prophecy to you. Worship God—for the spirit of prophecy by which I speak is like your confession—only the testimony of Jesus.

REFLECTION.

How lowly in mind are the angels of God—how exalted in office are the disciples of Jesus who bear witness to the truth !

LECTURE THIRTEENTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XIX: 11-XXI: 8.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.—*Rev. xix: 11-16.*

He who sat on the white horse is shown by his characters and titles to be the Son of God. He is “faithful and true” as performing all his engagements to God and fulfilling all his promises to man. In righteousness he doth judge and make war. The cause in which he is engaged is just, and all his measures are in harmony with it. His eyes were as a flame of fire, burning with holy indignation against his enemies. “And on his head were many crowns”—denoting his great authority

and many conquests. That he had a name that no one knew but he himself, indicates that the aims of his incarnation, exaltation and reign over the universe through eternal years, wholly transcend the grasp of created intelligences, and are comprehensible only by Omniscience. That he is known by his diadems, however, to be the incarnate Word, is shown by the name by which he is designated—The Word of God, the revealer of the Deity to creatures, the Creator of all things, the Redeemer of men. The vesture dipt in blood with which he is clothed, probably refers to the destruction of his foes, by which he had been and would be distinguished—so do the sharp sword, the iron sceptre and the winepress. And on his robe and on his thigh are written the titles of the office which he descends to assume on earth—King of kings and Lord of lords. He appears in his own person, because no created agent is adequate to represent him, either in nature or office. The office of the horse is merely to symbolize his descent to the earth as a king, and like the splendor of his countenance, the effulgence of his crowns, his garments and his armies, it shows that his advent is to be visible and with the power and pomp of a victorious monarch. The armies in heaven that follow him are of the same corporeal nature as he. This is manifest from their being seated on horses. They are shown to be raised and glorified saints, also, by their robes of fine white linen in which the

bride, by whom they were symbolized in a former vision, was arrayed. They also appear in their own persons, because no other beings, real or fictitious, are suited to represent them. And their descent is likewise to be visible. The opening of the heavens to reveal them, denotes that their descent is to be from paradise, the world where the Redeemer now reigns and the ransomed dwell. All these things show beyond question that the Son of God is to make a personal and visible advent to our world, and assume his glorious reign with his saints on earth. It is expressly said in the introduction of the Apocalypse, "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.—*Rev. xix: 17-21.*

The sun in this vision is doubtless, as under the fourth trumpet and fourth vial, a symbol of the

rulers exercising chief authority in the ten kingdoms. The angels stationed in it and summoning the birds to come and eat the flesh of the anti-Christian host, is a symbol of some conspicuous person or class, that is to be in close communication with those rulers—but not of their number,—and that is to warn them of their impending destruction. As the armies with their commanders and horses are to be literal armies, and the slaughter to be a literal slaughter, so the birds that fly in mid-heaven are to be literal birds, and carnivorous, as that species soar at great heights, and discern their prey at a distance. To suppose the birds, the slaughter and the carcasses are not to be literal, is to suppose that the death symbolized is not to be the death of the body, but of the soul, which is to contradict the whole representation. As the wild beast is the representative of all the civil rulers of the ten kingdoms, except those of the papal states denoted by the false prophet—the kings and their armies who are assembled with the wild beast, are to be regarded as the kings and armies of other anti-Christian kingdoms. All the usurping and persecuting enemies of Christ are to share in that catastrophe. The wild beast, i. e., the rulers of the ten kingdoms, and the false prophet, i. e., the hierarchies of these kingdoms, were cast alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. This implies that the bodies of those whom they symbolize are to be made immortal,

like those who are to be consigned to that abyss after a resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt. The rest of the armies are to be slain by the sword which proceeds from the mouth of the Word of God—the symbol that a sentence of avenging justice is to be pronounced on them—and the birds are to be filled with their flesh. This great battle, in which all the civil, ecclesiastical and military enemies of Christ, arrayed in open war against him, are to be destroyed, is doubtless the same as that of Armageddon, to which the kings are to be gathered by the unclean spirits. It is a wholly different gathering from that denoted by the vintage and the parable of the goats. This last is to take place subsequently, and is to embrace those who sustain the relation of supporters and approvers to the wild beast and false prophet, and who refuse all succor to the persecuted brethren of Christ.

As the glorified saints are to attend the Saviour at this advent, their resurrection, acceptance and exaltation as kings and priests, are to precede that great battle. And it is on that occasion, doubtless, that Christ's promise (chap. ii : 26,) is to be fulfilled, that he will give them power over the nations, and they shall rule them with an iron sceptre, as earthen vessels are broken.

And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him

a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.—*Rev. xx*: 1-3.

The angel with the key and chain in his hand, is obviously a literal angel, or a symbol of unfallen angels, not of men. The agency ascribed to him is such as none but angelic beings are competent to exert. He is distinguished here from those who are seduced by the devil, and he cannot, therefore, be a symbol of those nations, nor of a part of them. He is a representative of angels, then, not of men, and they are symbolized by one of their own species, because no being of another order is adequate to represent them. The dragon whom he seized is expressly declared to be the ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan—the seducer of the nations. He is bound with the chain—cast literally into the abyss—and shut up and sealed for a period indicated by a thousand years. The purpose of his imprisonment is that he might not seduce the nations any more during this period. But what is meant by the period of a thousand years? Is it literal or symbolic? Most expositors have regarded it as literal. I am rather inclined to consider the thousand years symbolic. Each day represents a year, and the thousand years, containing three hundred and sixty thousand days, would thus denote three hundred and sixty thousand years of our time! Whether we regard this period as literal,

or as symbolic, it does not affect the general interpretation of the prophecy. The events are the same, whatever space they occupy. After the expiration of this period, Satan must be again released from his confinement, and will go forth to resume his favorite work, as we shall presently see. This great vision, then, foreshows that the devil and his legions are to be seized by the holy angel and imprisoned in the abyss for three hundred and sixty thousand years, and that afterwards they are to be released for a short season. That imprisonment is to take place after the advent of the Redeemer—after the resurrection of the holy dead, and after the destruction of the wild beast and false prophet.

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.—*Rev. xx: 4-6.*

The order in which the objects of this great spectacle are enumerated is doubtless that in which they were presented to the apostle. He first saw thrones, perhaps a great multitude, as the martyrs and saints of all ages are innumerable. Next, august forms approached and sat on them, and a

sentence was pronounced on them, probably adjudging them to the station of kings and priests in Christ's kingdom on earth. Then he distinguished among them, first the martyrs, who had been slain for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God; next, those who had not worshiped the wild beast, nor its image, nor received its mark on their forehead or their hand. Finally, he learned that the spectacle was a symbol of the first resurrection, that they who were then to be raised were to reign with Christ the thousand years, that they were to be forever freed from liability to the second death, and that the rest of the dead were not to live till the thousand years should be finished.

As thrones are the stations on which kings exercise their office, their elevation to thrones indicates their appointment to the office of kings. Their authority being the sovereign gift of Christ, is to be exercised wholly in subordination to him. They are to reign with him and under him, as King of kings and Lord of lords, communicating his will to his subjects, vindicating his rights, and unfolding his great designs. They will reign over the nations then living on earth. They are also to be priests of God and of Christ, acting in that relation as representatives of their subjects, and presenting in his presence symbols of homage in their behalf.

The souls of the martyrs and others were their souls by symbolization, not their souls literally,

inasmuch as many of them were not then in existence. They are exhibited in their own persons, not by a symbol of a different species, because nothing else could adequately represent them. They are exhibited as souls, not as embodied saints, because they only are to be raised at the first resurrection. The living saints are to be raised by transfiguration to a similar glory, but probably at a later period. At any rate no mention is made of them in this vision.

The specific mention of martyrs, and of those who had not worshiped the wild beast, nor his image, does not imply that the whole were of those classes. They were doubtless but a part of the vast crowd. They who sat on the thrones and received judicial authority, symbolized the whole body of the saints who had died in all former ages. The martyrs are specified probably because of their peculiar conspicuity and honors. This vision, then, foreshows that at the advent of Christ, all the holy dead are to be raised, publicly adjudged to thrones in his kingdom, and to reign with him as kings and priests on earth during the vast succession of ages, symbolized by the thousand years. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." Other parts of the Bible concur with this exposition: "As in Adam all

die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end," &c.—*I Cor. xv: 23.* "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."—*I Thes. iv: 16.* All this while the bodies of the wicked dead are to lie dishonored in their graves. Satan and his hosts are to be locked up in the abyss. The nations of the earth are to submit to the authority of the Son of God, and peace, and righteousness, and love and joy are to cover the earth, as the waters cover the seas.—*Isaiah xi: 6-9.*

And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.—*Rev. xx: 7-10.*

Satan is here doubtless, as in the vision of his binding, a symbol of the whole body of fallen angels; and his release from prison is symbolic of their return to the seduction of men on earth. Gog and Magog are thought by interpreters generally to be the nations of northern Asia. Ezekiel

speaks of them (xxxix : 2) as coming from the North ; but John's allusion to the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, and to their number as the sand of the sea, would seem to imply a more general gathering than from the North. As Gog and Magog were the last enemies of Israel, so the last foes of Christ are called Gog and Magog. The camp of the saints probably denotes the unglorified rulers of the obedient nations—i. e. those whom Satan has not seduced. The beloved city is the New Jerusalem, which is the symbol of the glorified saints in their relations of kings and priests to unglorified men. (This will be seen in the next chapter). Satan's enticing Gog and Magog to assemble for battle, and their surrounding both the camp of the saints and the beloved city, may denote their attempt to subvert the rule both of the glorified and unglorified saints, and to elevate themselves into their places. That it is by his influence that they are to be excited to war, indicates that they had before been universally obedient. The descent of fire from heaven on the revolvers, denotes that they are to be destroyed, like the wild beast and false prophet, not by ordinary instruments, but by the immediate agency of the Almighty. And the casting of Satan into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented forever with the wild beast and false prophet, fore-shows that he and his legions are thereafter to be precluded from the earth and all other obedient

orbs, and consigned to the chains and darkness of the abyss.

This prophecy then announces that after the risen saints have reigned with Christ three hundred and sixty thousand years, Satan and his legions are to be allowed again to return to the earth and to tempt men—that seduced by them, remote nations are to revolt from the sway of the saints, which Christ has established over them, and to attempt to exalt themselves to supreme authority ; that they are to be destroyed, not by war and human resistance, but by a direct interposition of the eternal Word, and that the tempting angels thereafter are to be consigned to perpetual imprisonment in hell.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is *the book of life* : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them : and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.—*Rev. xx* : 11-15.

These solemn verses contain a prophecy of the resurrection of the unholy dead, and of their public and final judgment. The language is so simple as not to need, and so grand, as far to transcend any commentary. Suffice it to say, that a great white throne is set—great, to denote the dig-

nity of the judge, and white, to show the purity and justice of his decisions. The flight of the earth and heavens from the presence of the judge, indicates that the scene of the judgment was at a distance from their orbit. As the subjects of this vision were, on their resurrection, withdrawn from the earth, no reason existed, as in former visions, for its continued presence; and its flight accordingly, and that of the planets, was that of their real motion in their orbits. That no place was found for them, denotes simply, therefore, that they continued in motion. The dead, small and great, stand before the throne, having been raised from death. This is manifest from the sea's giving up the dead that were in it, and death and the grave giving up the dead that were in them. It is the bodies of the dead, not their souls, that descend into the sea and the grave, or remain unburied in the realms of death. The books are symbols of God's perfect knowledge of all the actions of those who are judged. Their being opened, denotes that he will manifest to them that knowledge, and will demonstrate to their consciousness that his judgment of them is according to their works. Men, because of the imperfection of their memory, make use of books to record human actions. But God's infinite knowledge needs no such aid. While, therefore, it is said symbolically, that these books contain the deeds of men, by which they are to be judged, yet it is strictly

true, that the all-comprehending, all-retaining mind of Deity will be the book from which he will accurately and infallibly judge the world. It is also said that death and the grave (translated hell in our version) were cast into the lake of fire. The grave is the depository of the buried dead, and death of the unburied dead, and both are places, or states, not agents. This construction of death as a place is confirmed by the symbolization of the second death by a place, not by an agent. This is the second death—the lake of fire. The dejection of death and the grave into that lake, denotes that no place of the dead is any more to exist on earth. All the wicked dead of all ages are to be the subjects of this resurrection and judgment. Whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. And they only are to be its subjects, because, according to a former vision (xx : 4–6), all the holy who die before the millennium are to be raised at its commencement, and to reign with Christ throughout that period, which is the first resurrection, and we shall see in the next vision that none are to die during that period. It is therefore, evident that this vision embraces all the impenitent dead, and them only. Their resurrection from the dead and their formal consignment to eternal perdition with the wild beast and false prophets, will not occur until the expiration of the millennial period. That they will not suffer punishment until then, does not follow any more than

that Satan and his legions will not suffer until they are confined in the abyss.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away ; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be their God*. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes ; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain : for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write : for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death.—*Rev. xxi: 1-8.*

The heaven, earth and sea are undoubtedly here, as under the trumpets and vials, symbolic. The new heaven represents rulers of a new order ; the new earth subjects of a new character, and the disappearance of the sea, along with the former heaven and earth, that the nations are no more to be agitated by storms of revolution and war. If this passage be literal, it coincides exactly with the statement of Peter : “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be

burned up.* *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."—II *Peter* iii: 10–13.

The New Jerusalem is the symbol of the raised and glorified saints, in their relation to men as kings and priests, who are to reign with Christ. It does not denote a literal city, but an organization of rulers extending a beneficent influence over those whom they govern, like the shelter of a city to those who dwell beneath its roofs. It must,

* We need not infer that the earth will be annihilated by the fires here spoken of. Indeed, the elements of matter are as indestructible as spirit. When you burn a piece of wood in the hearth, its constituent particles are not absolutely destroyed. They are dissolved—their relation to each other is changed, but all the original matter still exists. In fact there is now no more and no less matter in existence than when God formed all things. In like manner the material heavens and earth may be acted on by the fires here foretold. They will be purified from the stains and vestiges of sin, and made the fit abodes of righteousness. And instead of the redeemed going away to a distant heaven, they may all live together, and with God here, on the same earth, thus renovated, and under these same heavens, thus made more beautiful! If this be Peter's idea, it accords strikingly with John, who represents heaven as coming down to earth in the latter day. The incarnate Word, with all his glorified saints, and all his primeval angels, will thus reign in righteousness over the race of living men, through the progress of eternal ages.

therefore, denote the risen saints as kings and priests, as they alone are to descend from heaven to earth, and to exercise a sway over men. It is, in a subsequent vision, expressly termed "the bride, the Lamb's wife," (xxi: 9) by whom the risen saints have been already symbolized. As then the corrupt organization of churches was prefigured by the city of Babylon, so the organized reign of the glorified saints is symbolized by the New Jerusalem. John heard a voice, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he shall dwell in a tent (*σκηνώσει*) with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." All this denotes that the glorified saints are to be visible to men, as a tent is visible to those in whose presence it is stationed, and that God is to be visibly present with the glorified saints, as his presence was manifested in the ancient temple when it was filled with the smoke and flame of his glory. Men universally are to be sanctified—to own and honor him as God, and enjoy manifestations of his presence and favor. He is to wipe away every tear from their eyes. They are no more to be subjected to death, nor to know any thing of sorrow, mourning, or toil. For the former things have passed away. All the

forms of penal evil, brought on the race by the fall, are to cease, and a new era to commence. To confirm the idea of the heavenly state thus brought down to earth, he who sat on the throne, said, "Behold I make all things new!" and then addressed his servant John thus: "Write: for these words are true and faithful." All that you have seen shall surely be fulfilled. He proceeds to declare this period as the grand consummation: "It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." All the purposes of mercy that a faithful, eternal, unchanging God had cherished, are now accomplished; the fountain of eternal life is unsealed; the victor inherits all things that God possesses; because he is now a son of God, and God is his father. All good centres in, and flows from that relation. The unholy of all classes are to be excluded from this joyous community, and consigned to the abyss of misery. The descent of the city is to occur at the beginning of the millennium, and Gog and Magog will not be destroyed till its termination; so that their overthrow is not inconsistent with the statement, that death will not exist during this period.

REFLECTION.

What glorious prospects await all the people of God! Lift up your heads—hope, wonder, and rejoice.

LECTURE FOURTEENTH.

REVELATIONS, CHAPTER XXI : 9-XXII : 21.

And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God : and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal ; and had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel : on the east three gates ; on the north three gates ; on the south three gates ; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth : and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper : and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony ; the fourth, an emerald ; the fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolite ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth ; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl :

and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.—*Rev.* xxi: 9-27; xxii: 1-5.

The city is here declared to be the symbol of the bride, the Lamb's wife—the raised and glorified saints who are adopted as joint-heirs with Christ, exalted to thrones and associated with him in his reign on earth. It is styled the New Jerusalem. Its descent to the earth symbolizes their descent from heaven after their justification and investiture as kings and priests in his empire. The splendor of the elements of which it is built denotes the beauty of their persons and the perfection of their character. Its magnitude denotes the incomprehensible greatness of their multitude. That magnitude transcends the vastest extent over which the

unaided eye can discern the most brilliant objects on the surface of the earth. It is a square area of twelve thousand furlongs—fifteen hundred miles. The regularity of its form, the harmony of its parts, and its massiveness and strength, imply the symmetry of their relations to each other, the unity of their spirit, and the energy of their sway. The phrase “and the height of it,” is thought by some to be spurious. The height of a city must refer to the walls; but they are afterwards said to be, not twelve thousand furlongs high, but one hundred and forty-four cubits, or two hundred and sixteen feet high. If this phrase be genuine, the whole verse means, not that the length, breadth and height are the same, but that its length is the same at whatever point it is measured—that its breadth is the same at all points, and that its height is the same at all points. These dimensions are uniform.

The gates symbolize the access to the glorified saints which the nations are to enjoy. That they are distributed equally to all the sides, indicates that they are to be accessible alike to the nations wherever they may reside. That there is to be no night there, shows that they are never to be without the visible presence of God. That its gates are never shut, denotes that the nations are to enjoy uninterrupted access to the glorified, and the stationing of an angel at each gate, that that access is subject to conditions, and regulated by an exalted order assigned to that office.

The twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were the symbols, in the vision of the sealing, of all the branches or families of pure worshipers. The inscription of the names of those tribes on the gates denotes, accordingly, that all the branches of the unglorified race are to have access to the glorified saints, but each with a part or division peculiarly appropriate to themselves. As in a walled city inhabited by different tribes, the inscription on separate gates of the names of the several tribes would imply that each tribe was to pass through the gate distinguished by its name, so it is here.

In the temple in Jerusalem, the mercy-seat, the symbol of the throne of God in the visible displays of his presence, was in the holy of holies, entirely withdrawn from the sight of the worshipers, and beheld only by the high priest once a year. That there is no temple in the New Jerusalem, denotes, therefore, that the presence of the Redeemer is to be visible to the worshipers at large, and not, as under the Mosaic dispensation, veiled from their sight.

The sun and moon are symbols of the supreme legislative and executive rulers in a state. When, therefore, it is said that the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God enlightens it and its lamp is the Lamb, the meaning is that it is to have no need that the unglorified or glorified saints should make laws for it, as God is to be its Lawgiver, and Christ is to sup-

ply it with all the commands and counsels which its exigencies are to require. That the nations are to walk by its light signifies that they are to be guided by the teachings which Christ communicates to the glorified saints. That the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it, implies that the chiefs of the nations are to exercise their office in perfect subordination to the saints whom it symbolizes, and employ themselves in subserving the ends which they enjoin. That no one is to enter it that is unclean, or that works defilement or falsehood, indicates that sanctification is requisite in order to that relation to the glorified which admission to its gates denotes, and thence, as all nations are to walk in its light, that the race is universally to be holy. The river of the water of life, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb, is the symbol, doubtless, of the renewing and sanctifying influences by which the nations are to be imbued with spiritual life. The leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations, symbolize the means of their restoration from mortality, and the fruit of that tree denotes the pledge of their transfiguration to glory, for there shall be no curse any more. Every individual is to be perfectly redeemed from the dominion of sin and freed from its penalty. That the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and that his servants, i. e., the nations that are healed, not the glorified saints whom the city symbolizes, shall

serve him and shall see his face, this indicates that they are to yield a perfect submission to his authority, and to enjoy his visible presence. His name being on their foreheads, implies that they are to exhibit the clearest evidence that they are truly his children. And finally, that they are to have no need of the light of lamp nor sun, but that the Lord God shall shine on them, as he does on the glorified saints, and that they shall reign forever and ever—all this denotes that they are at length to have no need of any teacher but God, and are therefore to be transfigured to glory, like those who have been raised from death and exalted to the stations of kings and priests in his kingdom.

And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Behold, I come quickly: blessed ~~is~~ he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See *thou* do it not: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without *are* dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the

offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.—*Rev. xxii: 6-21.*

The prophecy closes with the fifth verse of the twenty-second chapter. The angel confirms all his revelations by a solemn assurance that they are "faithful and true." This denotes that they exhibit a true representation of the purposes of God and of the actors and events of which the world was soon to become the scene, and that they are to be perfectly verified. The things that were soon to come to pass are the whole train of agencies foreshown in the visions, considered as one series, and were nigh, inasmuch as the commencement of the series was at hand. The homage which the apostle was about to pay to the angel was probably not of adoration, but of gratitude, for his condescension in showing him the great things which were soon to be, and especially the grandeurs of the reign of the glorified saints with Christ. It indicates a fervid sense of the significance of the visions he had beheld, the vastness and glory of the Redeemer's designs, the splendor of the destiny assigned to his people, and the beauty and blessed-

ness to which the nations are to be exalted under his sway. The angel exhibits in his reply the spirit of the true worshipers, in contrast with the usurpers of the rights of God and their idolatrous vassals. It was God who appointed him to that work, not himself, and in fulfilling it, he acted in the same relations to him as a servant, in which the apostle himself acted, the same in which the prophets, and they who keep the words of the book were called to act, in fulfilling their office as his witnesses.

The words, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand ; he that is unjust, let him be unjust still," etc., are addressed to the prophet, doubtless, as the representative of God's witnesses in all ages. The import of them is, thou must not withhold from the church nor misrepresent the revelations of this book, but proclaim them in their truth, representing those as unjust whom the prophecy exhibits as unjust, and those as defiled whom the prophecy represents as defiled, and those as righteous and holy to whom it ascribes that character. The Redeemer enforces this injunction by announcing his deity and his title to implicit obedience, and by the assurance that he is to come quickly, to retribute to every one as his work shall be.

The benediction which is next pronounced on those who obey his commands, is a benediction of those who live under his reign after the establish-

ment of the kingdom of the glorified saints on earth. This is manifest from the statement that they are to acquire by their obedience a title to the tree of life and an entrance through the gates into the city. They are to live after the descent of that city, therefore, and not before it, and are to be of those who enter and dwell within it, not of those who constitute the city itself. They are to include the whole race then existing, inasmuch as all others—the dogs, the sorcerers, the fornicators, the murderers, the idolaters, and whoever loveth and maketh a lie—are to be excluded, and these are to be banished from the earth, as the city is to open its gates to all nations. The annunciation that he who sent his angel to testify these things to the churches is Jesus, the Messiah promised to the ancient prophets—that the Spirit and the bride say come, and that whoever hears is to say come, is marked by a beauty and grandeur of meaning scarcely surpassed in any other passage of the book. As the saints, who are the bride, do not in their intermediate state, i. e., between their death and resurrection, address men, the invitation they utter is to be referred to their reign with Christ on earth, when they are to exercise the office of kings and priests. The passage indicates an agency, therefore, which they are to exert throughout the interminable ages of redemption. The Root and the Offspring of David, the bright, the morning Star, is the incarnate Word, who is to reign and carry on the work of

salvation forever and ever. The Spirit is to continue his renewing and sanctifying influence, and say to the sons and daughters of the race, as they are summoned from age to age into existence, *Come*. The raised and transfigured saints are to repeat the call through the flight of everlasting years; the unglorified who hear it, are to take it up and reiterate the call to those around them, and every breast is to be filled and transported with a sense of the infinitude and freeness of the Saviour's grace. The terrific threat to those who add to the prophecy, or take from it, indicates that men are to be under violent temptation to reject or pervert it in order to evade the application of its predictions to themselves. And how needful to presumption, to party zeal and to ambition, is the restraint it is suited to impose! With what a daring spirit have some, especially the friends of the nationalized hierarchies, set aside the obvious meaning of its symbols, and forced on them constructions the most unauthorized and the most unnatural. This they have done to escape the demonstration that the great apostate powers which it foreshadows are those to which they belong. This threat shows the estimate which the divine Being places on his revealed truth. It is neither too much nor too little. We must receive just what God says, and labor simply to understand and to obey his will. For the third time the Saviour says, "Surely I come quickly." To this tes-

timony John adds his cordial *Amen*. Even so, come Lord Jesus. The benediction closes the epistle and closes our exposition.

CONCLUSION.

1. This prophecy exhibits the true worshipers as perpetually involved, until the advent of Christ, in a fierce conflict with antagonist powers. It is made a question throughout the whole period—Who shall reign? Who has the chief right of dominion over men? Christ claims exclusive homage, on the ground of his deity and work as Redeemer. But a long succession of opposing powers dispute his rights, and usurp his throne. First come the pagans; then the civil authorities; then the ecclesiastical. The true worshipers are reduced to a small number, and ascend to heaven out of great tribulation.

2. This conflict is conducted in the presence of the redeemed of heaven, and of angels, and engages their profoundest attention. They witnessed its symbolization in the visions; understood its nature and design, and saw its gradual progress. They offer in the divine presence, symbols of the prayers of the saints for deliverance; cast fire to the earth, in token of avenging judgments; and hymn the praises of God at the commencement of the punishment, and at the final overthrow of the wild beast and false prophet.

3. The usurpation of his empire by his enemies,

through so vast a period, is allowed for reasons of wisdom and love. It was perhaps, at first, unexpected to all his creatures, and wrapped in clouds and darkness. But the songs of the heavenly hosts show that they regard it as founded on reasons worthy of the Supreme, forming a dazzling display of his perfections, and destined to subserve his glory, and the well-being of his kingdom throughout his everlasting reign. When the great tragedy draws to a close, they give thanks that he has reigned, amid all the seeming confusion, and that all things will result in glory to Him, and in salvation to his church.

4. When the usurping powers have reached the end of their career, Christ is to interpose, and by tremendous judgments refute their pretensions, vindicate himself from their blasphemies, and prepare the way for their destruction. At that crisis the true worshipers are to be more distinctly separated from the anti-christian powers, and the contest between them is to rise to greater violence. The witnesses are to be slaughtered in such numbers as to fill their enemies with the confidence of triumph. But at that dread epoch the Son of God is publicly to raise them from death, take them to heaven, and thus show that they are his true worshipers. And at a later period, when persecution is renewed, he is again to interpose, and by the resurrection and assumption to heaven of all his saints, and by the destruction of their foes, is

to present to all the survivors of the race overwhelming proofs, that they who had so long claimed to be his vice-gerents were his enemies, and thus prepare the way for his acknowledgment as their God and King.

5. Though this great process of judgment has already commenced, yet the train of great events which is still to precede the advent of the Redeemer must naturally occupy many years. These events are a fuller proclamation of the gospel to all nations, and a warning of his approaching judgments; the sealing of the servants of God; the revolutions that are to follow the excitement of the winds after their sealing; the persecution and slaughter of the witnesses; their resurrection; the changes that are to succeed their resurrection and assumption to heaven; the fall of the apostate hierarchies; the summons of the people of God to come out of them after the fall; another and last persecution; and the procedure of the unclean spirits from the dragon, wild beast and false prophet, to gather the kings to battle against God.

6. Political agitations over the whole earth are also to follow the seventh trumpet, that must occupy a long period before the destruction of the anti-christian powers at the great battle. That destruction will fall only on the usurping civil rulers, the apostate hierarchies and their armies. These are to be cast alive into the lake of fire. The harvest of the saints is probably to follow that bat-

tle, and is to constitute a public acknowledgment of all the truly sanctified who survive on earth, as the children of God. The vintage is to take place at a still later period, and is to constitute the judgment and condemnation of those who have approved and sustained the anti-christian powers in their war on God—not of the race at large. When all these foes have thus been destroyed, Satan and his legions are to be cast into their prison, and restrained, during the millennial period, from tempting the nations.

7. At length the incarnate Word is to descend and establish his throne on the earth, as King of kings and Lord of lords. The glorified saints are to enjoy stations in his kingdom as princes and priests, suited to the grandeur of their faculties, the vastness of their knowledge, and the beauty of their rectitude. All the nations are to be sanctified and freed from exhausting toil, suffering, sorrow and death. The earth is to be converted into a paradise of righteousness, blessedness and life, and thus shown to be the fit abode of a holy and happy race. The saints living at his advent are, probably after his kingdom has thus been established, to be transfigured and united with those raised from death, and in that mode are the generations of the race thereafter to be glorified. Both classes are to behold the Redeemer, bend at his throne, and enjoy his smile.

8. When he has thus reigned throughout the

millennium, Satan and his hosts are again to be released, and allowed to seduce men into apostacy. They will thereby show that their thirst for evil remains unquenched, and that men, though in conditions most propitious to obedience, when left by the Spirit and assailed by temptation, instantly revolt, and thence renew the demonstration, that their salvation is wholly of God.

9. Satan and his hosts having thus manifested their steadfast hate, and the danger of their being allowed access to other orders of beings, are then to be consigned to the abyss of darkness, throughout their immortal existence, and infinite proofs having been given during the millennium of the righteousness of his reign whom they refused to obey, the unholy dead are then also to be raised from the grave, publicly judged, and consigned to eternal punishment.

10. Men are thereafter to continue obedient through everlasting years, and swell to numbers as vast as would have descended from the first pair throughout eternal ages, had they never revolted. How infinite are the designs of the Redeemer ! How worthy of him the results that are to spring from his interposition ! How sublime the destiny of his people ! Come, Lord Jesus !

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